

WEEKLY FREE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR



EDF ENERGY London and South of England Media Awards

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Kent on Sunday

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East edition No 701

TRANSPORT

Uni team jet off to help fight Zika virus

Experts fly to Brazil to join fight to tackle disease

PROFILE

Craig Mackinlay on life in Westminster

MP on founding Ukip, a move to unitary councils and Manston

ENTERTAINMENT

Academy Awards inspiration

How the Oscars will spur on county's young filmmakers

REFERENDUM

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By Alan Bennett.

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Is it time for our two-tier council system to go?

IN AN era of ever constricting local council budgets there comes a time when we may need to give serious consideration to a major review of our two-tier structure.

After all, as it stands right now, all our dozen or so councils each have their own specialist departments for the services they are obliged to provide.

And then sat on top of that is Kent County Council and another layer of departments and taxpayer expense.

Yet there is an alternative. The unitary authority model is one which rears its head once in a while, normally upsets Kent County Council, and then disappears again. But surely it is a debate worth having again now?

It could streamline departments and with councils having to work towards being self-sufficient, provide the economies of scale necessary to negotiate deals



Editor **Chris Britcher**

which deliver good value.

Imagine a number set up across the county - uniting geographical areas - it could prove beneficial in a variety of ways.

Medway Council took the plunge in 1998 and it is a model which appears to work. We'll take a special look at this issue in next week's edition, but you can read MP Craig Mackinlay's views in our profile article on him inside today.

The problem he highlights - and which always proves the stumbling block - is that for it to be agreed, the councils must effectively vote themselves out of a job. And for some reason, it's hard to see Paul Carter raising his hand to destroy his power-base or, for that matter, any other council leader. You can understand why, but it may need a brave step to adjust to the reality of relentless shrinking of state spending.

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Tunnel vision protest as £150k fighting fund set

By Luke May

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GRAVESHAM Borough Council is to pull £150,000 out of its cash reserves as a fighting fund in a bid to derail plans to build a tunnel under the Thames.

An eight-week consultation into proposals to construct a £6 billion tunnel beneath the river which will cut through countryside close to the villages of Shorne, Chalk and Higham, is now at the halfway point.

Launched by Highways England, it has attracted fierce criticism from campaigners who say a consultation into just one option – the alternative plan was for an additional crossing at Dartford – is unfair.

To further muddy the waters, transport minister Patrick McLoughlin this week confirmed a second bridge at Dartford, Option A, was still a viable option and has not yet been ruled out.

Dartford is desperate to not add to the congestion and air pollution problems it has to currently contend with.

Following his meeting with the minister, Conservative leader of the



ROUTE: Tempers are beginning to flare over plans for the Lower Thames Crossing

council, John Cubitt, said: “Highways England’s latest consultation certainly implies that a second bridge at Dartford is no longer under consideration but the secretary of state – on whose shoulders the final decision rests – has made it clear that this is not the case.”

“Highways England’s latest consultation is also disingenuous concerning the relative costs of the two options. Their view of Option A

is to include all the ancillary costs at Dartford but not for Option C. “The previous consultation in 2013 came to precisely the opposite conclusion on costs and put Dartford as the best value for money option.”

Earlier this week, campaign group Abridge2far wrote a letter to more than 80 county councillors urging them to reject the proposals ahead of a council meeting next month.

Kent County Council has long supported the Gravesham option – a move which saw cabinet member Bryan Sweetland resign earlier this month in protest at the destruction he said the tunnel would bring to his borough.

A protest against the Gravesham plans was due to take place yesterday (Saturday) in Gravesend town centre.

So far more than 8,000 people have attended consultation events.

Lord Howard calls for Brexit in latest blow to prime minister’s plans

FORMER Folkestone and Hythe MP Michael Howard has come out in support of Britain quitting the European Union.

The former Tory leader – now Lord Howard of Lympne – served as a Kent MP from 1982 to 2010, serving in the cabinets of both Margaret Thatcher and John Major; most memorably as home secretary.

He led the Conservatives between 2003 and 2005 before resigning and being replaced by David Cameron.

Once a political mentor to the PM, he revealed on Friday Britain should vote to leave to “shake Europe’s leaders out of their complacency” – potentially leading to an alternative deal which could be put to a second referendum.

But chancellor George Osborne issued a warning about the potential impact of Brexit, saying it could cause a shock to the economy.

Lord Howard said Britain “would be sorely missed” if it quit the EU and suggested “there would be a significant chance that they would ask us to

think again” if voters backed a Brexit.

The Tory peer said the EU needed greater flexibility, with individual member states given “room to breathe”.

In an article for the Daily Telegraph, he wrote: “I had hoped that when the prime minister announced his intention to commence negotiations for a new relationship between the UK and the EU he might be able to achieve fundamental reform along these lines.”

“When he spoke, at the outset of the negotiations, of the need for fundamental reform, I believe he may have had something of this kind in mind.

“It is not his fault that those efforts met with failure. It is the fault of those EU leaders so mesmerised by their outdated ambition to create a country called Europe that they cannot contemplate any loosening of the ties which bind member states.”

■ **For our full coverage on the start of the race to the EU referendum on June 23, turn to page 19.**

G4S to hand over running of Medway detention centre

SECURITY company G4S confirmed on Friday it will be selling its children’s services business, which includes the contract to manage Medway Secure Training Centre.

The company came under fire earlier this year after undercover footage filmed by BBC Panorama showed inmates at the centre in Rochester being

assaulted and bullied.

G4S subsequently fired four members of staff before director, Ralph Merchant announced he was stepping down.

A G4S spokesperson said: “The wellbeing and education of the children in the company’s care will remain its priority until such time as an orderly transition to a new operator has been completed.”

Festival unveils strong line-up featuring Suede and Kodaline

SUEDE, Kodaline and Dizzee Rascal have been confirmed as headliners at this summer’s Forgotten Fields festival.

The event, which saw its inaugural year sell out, will take place at Eridge Park, near Tunbridge Wells.

Suede last performed in Kent in 2012 when they headlined the Sunday night of the Hop Farm

Festival in Paddock Wood.

Running from August 5 to 7 it also features the likes of Kelis, Maximo Park, The Sugar Hill Gang, Newton Faulkner, Kula Shaker and a host more.

The festival is promoted by From the Fields, the team behind the successful Kendal Calling festival.

Tickets are on sale now from £105 for an adult weekend pass.



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Hatton Garden raid 'Master' rushed to hospital

BRIAN Reader, named "the Master" in the Hatton Garden safe deposit raid has reportedly been moved from his prison to a hospital ward.

The 76-year-old, from Dartford, was the oldest member of a group of aged thieves who stole £14 million in April 2015.

It is believed he has been moved from Belmarsh

Prison to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Lewisham.

Reader, who travelled to the raid using a pensioner's travel card, is awaiting sentencing for his part in the raid after pleading guilty.

A Prison Service spokesperson said on Friday: "A prisoner was taken to hospital. He remains there to receive treatment for an ongoing medical condition."



VICTIM: Young Melissa Crook

Crook family tragedy part of TV series

A DOCUMENTARY on the tragic death of Melissa Crook, her infant son and her father – all killed in an arson attack at their family home in Chatham – airs on television tonight (Sunday).

In 2011, Ms Crook, 20, her son, 15-month-old Noah, and her father Mark Crook, all died following a fire started by her ex-husband Danai Muhammadi.

He was jailed for life in 2012 after he was found guilty of three counts of murder and two counts of attempted murder along with his accomplice Farhad Mahmud.

Muhammadi's girlfriend at the time, Emma Smith, was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 14 years for her involvement.

The documentary features interviews from her sister, Charlotte Acton, who discusses the relationship between Ms Crook and Muhammadi.

Ms Crook's mother, Amanda Crook, who escaped the blaze also features in the documentary, which will be aired at 9pm on the Crime and Investigation Channel (CI).

The documentary, part of the Britain's Darkest Taboos series will also feature analysis from psychiatrists, and reports from former detective superintendent David Swindle.

Council tax rises 4 per cent in Medway as the 16/17 budget is approved

By Tom Pyman

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COUNCILLORS in Medway have approved a council tax increase of nearly four per cent.

At a meeting on Thursday, they voted for 1.994 per cent increase in the unitary authority's slice of council tax, as well as an additional two per cent social care precept, as allowed by the chancellor last year.

Like many other local authorities across the country, Medway council has had to balance the books following the loss of £12m in grant support from central government compared with last year.

This year's council tax equates to £1,234.89 per year for an average Band D home – a rise of 91p a week, or £47 a year, on 2015/16.

Kent County Council also voted in favour of a similar rise when its budget was approved earlier this month, with an average Band D home charged £1,133.55 in council tax.



LEADER: Alan Jarrett

Savings of £14m are having to be made this year in Medway, with a total of £40m of cuts being made over the next four years.

Council leader Alan Jarrett said: "It's been a really tough task to bal-

ance this budget, something we have spent a long time on to ensure we protect the services that are most important to local people, while still making the vast savings required.

"We have absolutely been backed into a corner by central government, as have all local authorities, and while we have again managed to find ways of continuing to deliver important and quality services, continued future funding cuts will be damaging to the level of service we are able offer local people – something we have always strived to avoid.

"The 1.994 per cent rise in council tax and the additional social care precept is unavoidable if we want to maintain services."

Leader of the Medway Labour group Vince Maple said: "The Medway Tories will be forcing some of our most vulnerable residents to pay a higher percentage of council tax than anyone else in the country.

"I'm worried about what these cuts will mean to Medway residents and the front line services they rely on."

Cricket club reports improving cash flow

KENT County Cricket Club has seen improvements for the sixth consecutive year in its financial results.

The club has announced earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) of £345,784, representing dramatic positive progress since 2009.

While the historical deficit for the year after interest, depreciation and taxation was £142,659, the club announced the rise of net assets by almost £1.4m to a total of £7.7m.

Kent has also reported that, after the end of the financial year, the sale of land on the Old Dover Road side of St Lawrence to retirement home developers McCarthy and Stone was completed, meaning further increased revenue is expected to be shown in next year's figures.

CEO Jamie Clifford said: "It is very pleasing to report, once again, continued improvement in our trading results. We now all look forward to the 2016 season with huge anticipation. Let's hope that it brings us the success we all crave."

Parental pressure is 'encouraging doping'

PRESSURE to be perfect from parents makes young male athletes to look positively at doping, research from the University of Kent shows.

Research from its school of sport and exercise sciences revealed parental pressure makes junior athletes more likely to use banned substances to enhance sporting performance.

Now lead researcher Daniel Madigan says anti-doping programmes should target junior athletes early in their sporting careers, and that parents should be made aware of such pressure.

Published by the Journal of Sports Sciences, the research discovered that young athletes' attitudes to doping are most influenced by their parents. The research examined perfectionism and attitudes towards doping in 129 male British junior athletes, average age 17. Mr Madigan said: "With the rise of parenting where strict and demanding parents push their children to high levels of achievement, this study reveals the price young athletes may choose to pay to meet their parents expectations and dreams."

Brakes set for sale in £2.2bn takeover

CATERING supplier Brakes is set to be sold to an American foodservice distributor in a deal worth £2.2 billion.

The firm, which has its headquarters in Ashford, is to be sold to the Sysco Corporation.

The Brakes Group, which employs more than 15,000 people across operations in the UK, France, Sweden, Spain, Ireland, Belgium and Luxembourg, is currently owned by private equity firm Bain Capital.

The deal is subject to regulatory review by European Union competition authorities but is expected to be concluded before the end of July.

Following the takeover, the group will continue to operate as a standalone business within Sysco and still led by chief executive officer Ken McKeikan. Sysco says the management team and all other employees will remain in place.

Mr McKeikan said: "Last year we said we would look for the best strategic option for Brakes Group's next stage of development and we are delighted to have now concluded this process by joining Sysco."

Patients receive letter amid a fear of hepatitis C infections

By Luke May

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PATIENTS who may have been treated by a healthcare worker at one of the county's biggest hospitals have been contacted amid fears they may have been exposed to hepatitis C.

It forms part of a public health exercise taking place primarily in Lanarkshire, where 8,383 patients are being notified after the worker was tested positive in 2008. He had worked there for 26 years.

But he also spent three months at Ashford's William Harvey Hospital between January and April 2006.

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHUT) says it has already written to 46 patients informing them of the situation and advising they arrange for a blood test with their local GP.

It stresses only patients who have received a letter need the test.

Hepatitis C can cause damage to the liver but new treatments are proving increasingly effective at tackling it.

Based on the information available at the time the healthcare worker tested positive in 2008, the UK Advisory Panel on Healthcare Workers Infected with Blood-borne Viruses advised that a patient notification exercise was not needed.



CHECKS: Blood testing will be required on more than 40 Kent patients

However, that has subsequently changed after NHS Lanarkshire's health protection team was made aware in 2015 of a patient recently referred for treatment for hepatitis C who had a surgical procedure carried out by the worker. Further investigations identified that it was probable that this patient was infected with the virus as a result.

Dr James Nash, consultant microbiologist at EKHUT, said: "We would like to reassure patients who have received the letter that the likelihood of them having acquired the virus

from a procedure carried out by the healthcare worker is low.

"We know that some people will be concerned about what this means for them and we have apologised to patients for any worry caused by this situation. Fortunately there are safe and effective treatments available to treat hepatitis C infection.

"We are committed to supporting patients and are ensuring they have every opportunity to ask any questions they have about hepatitis C and getting tested."

Decision taken to close oldest hospital

THE oldest hospital in England, St Bartholomew's in Rochester, is set to close.

Known to many as Barts, it can trace its history as far back as 1078 and once took care of the poor and lepers.

Now Medway CCG, which commissions services at the hospital, has announced that the building on New Road is no longer fit for purpose and that services are to be moved elsewhere.

Funeral fund for dead biker hits £1.5k

Almost £1,500 has been donated to an online fund to help raise money for the funeral of a motorcyclist who died in a crash in Sheerness earlier this month.

Friends of Alessandro Arcadipine, 26, known as Alex, want to give him "the send-off he deserves" and had hoped raise £1,000.

Vicious bottle attack

DETECTIVES are appealing for help after a 23-year-old man was attacked with a bottle in an unprovoked assault in the Zee Bar in Tunbridge Wells High Street last Sunday shortly after 1am.

He was ordering a drink when a man next to him hit him in the face with a bottle and then repeatedly attacked him with the broken bottle.

He was left with serious cuts and lacerations.



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Tribute to Bowie at the Brits as actor praises his 'courage'

DAVID Bowie's close friend Gary Oldman has said the late singer faced his cancer with "courage, dignity, grace and customary humour" as the Brit Awards paid a special tribute.

The actor joined Eurythmics frontwoman Annie Lennox on stage to posthumously accept Bowie's Brits Icon Award, an accolade given to artists who have made a "lasting impact on the nation's culture".

The Life On Mars singer died on January 10 after a private 18-month battle with liver cancer.

He grew up in Beckenham – now part of London borough Bromley but then part of Kent – before leaving when he had his first hits.

Oldman said: "I never once heard him complain. I can share with you



that David faced his illness with enormous courage, dignity, grace and customary humour. Even in dire circumstances, when he wrote to tell me the bad news he had cancer he added, 'the good news is

I've got cheekbones back'. He was the sweetest soul ever, with the best cheekbones, until it was done."

After the show, Bowie's son Duncan Jones said the tribute was "just beautiful".

Son faces jail after killing his father in knife attack

A 30-year-old man will be sentenced on Thursday after being found guilty of stabbing his father to death.

Patrick Murphy, from Tonbridge, was convicted of manslaughter at Maidstone Crown Court on Tuesday.

He left his victim suffering fatal wounds to his chest and arms at the family home in Hectorage Road, last May 19.

Police had been called to the property at 7.15pm, to reports that two men had suffered serious knife injuries. Murphy had repeatedly stabbed his father, Joseph Murphy, 54. He died at the scene. He also attacked his brother, who sustained chest and arm injuries. He later recovered.

Following an argument earlier in the day, Murphy had

returned armed with knives he had bought from a local supermarket.

Murphy was found guilty of manslaughter in relation to the death of his father, and of wounding with intent of his brother.

Detective Chief Inspector Tony Pledger said: "Joseph Murphy and his son had been involved in what had seemed like a trivial argument about charging Patrick's mobile phone. Sadly, the dispute seems to have acted as a catalyst to a chain of events, which has ended with a truly horrific and sustained assault by Murphy on both his father and brother.

"After consuming alcohol Murphy visited a DIY store and a supermarket in the town and chose his weapons. This really is a tragic case which has torn a family apart."

Attend NHS meeting

THE NHS Canterbury and Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is inviting people to its governing body meeting on Wednesday.

The meeting will take place from 2pm to 3pm in Thanington Neighbourhood Resource Centre on Thanington Road.

Oyster festival's dates

ONE of the highlights of the summer, the Whitstable Oyster Festival, has confirmed its dates for 2016.

The event will run from July 22 to the 31. More than 80,000 people attended last year's event in the seaside town. A campsite will once again be in operation.

Uni's ASD research call

PSYCHOLOGISTS at the University of Kent are looking for participants to take part in a project to uncover more of the secrets of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Anyone interested in taking part should contact Catherine Grainger at cg411@kent.ac.uk or 01227 827266. Some conditions apply.

Dreamland's egg-cited

DREAMLAND has confirmed it's opening its doors again for Easter with a host of themed events under the Hoist the Main Sail banner.

The doors of the park in Margate open from Good Friday, March 25, to Sunday, April 10. Entry tickets will provide access to all rides and attractions.

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Top Three Stories



1. Oldest hospital to close

Services at St Bart's re-provided elsewhere

2. £13k for lupus sufferer

Last chance before Kirsty Keep ends life

3. Dogs die in house fire

A woman was also hospitalised

The Essential Guide:



...to the Thames crossing

Everything you need to know about plans for a tunnel east of Gravesend



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: The Duke of Kent met with representatives from Network Rail, Southeastern and Medway council to officially open Rochester's new £26m train station on Wednesday.

Missed last week's...?

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Top Three Blogs



1. Holding doors open

It's not hard to say thank you

2. Why Folkestone is great

The town has a lot going for it

3. Straight outta uni

A young man steps into the real world

Results of the KoS Online Poll

How much do you care about the referendum?

- 1 It means everything to me - 56%
- 2 I don't care - 4%
- 3 I'm reasonably interested - 36%
- 4 I don't know enough about it - 4%







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FRANCHISE HISTORY

PRIOR to the privatisation of our railways, British Rail separated its rail network into three areas. For London and the south east, it was Network South East.

In 1994, when British Rail came out of state ownership, Network Rail was broken down into a number of sectors, with each one operated by companies awarded on a franchise basis.

French-owned Connex emerged to run the bulk of Kent services, turning in to Connex South Eastern in 1996, it ran the routes until 2003.

However, its contract was cut short from 2011 because of problems.

The responsibility for getting Kent commuters to London was then handed to South Eastern Trains, who ran it to 2006 when Southeastern appeared.



OPTION: The big question is just who will bid for a train line which is so busy and so vital every late train and problem can become a major news story

Southeastern tight-lipped as to whether it will bid once again

With expressions of interest for the new train franchise due later this year, both Southeastern and its parent company the Go-Ahead Group are refusing to comment on if they will be in the tendering

By Chris Murphy

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TRAIN firm Southeastern has refused to say if it is going to bid once again to secure the franchise to operate services on the county's rail network.

There are just two years left on its existing contract, but expressions of interest must be submitted by November this year.

However, when we asked simply to confirm it would be one of those in the running, it refused to comment.

And that will fuel speculation the operator, which consistently scores among the worst in the country for customer satisfaction, may be ready to admit defeat and quit.

Southeastern, which operates services, was given a two-year contract extension in September 2014, stretching its contract from 2016 to 2018. In part in order to compensate for the multi-billion pound work taking place at London Bridge, which has caused considerable disruption to many commuters' routes.

But a catalogue of problems – not all of the train operator's making – has caused its reputation to be tarnished.

A recent Which? survey asked passengers across the country to rate train lines on eight criteria.

These were availability of seating, availability and cleanliness of toilets, cleanliness of carriages, overall condition of train, reliability, frequency, punctuality and value for money.

With a score of just 46 per cent, Southeastern was among the bottom three operators nationwide. The highest ranked was Grand Central on 79 per cent.

Southeastern is responsible for operating trains on Kent, London and East Sussex routes. Network Rail, a different company which operates across the UK, is responsible for the maintenance of the rail infrastructure and ensuring it is kept clear for services to operate during poor weather conditions.

But while Southeastern is often unfairly criticised for track problems – over-crowded trains, delayed services and poor communication with customers have frequently seen it attract the ire of travellers and politicians alike.

So how will the franchise process work?

Firstly, each company interested in bidding for any of the nation's rail franchises needs to possess what is known as a pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) passport. This ensures each company is in a position to bid competitively for franchises when the government advertises them.

Southeastern is owned by Govia, a joint venture between the Go-Ahead Group (65 per cent) and Keolis (35 per cent). Both were awarded passports in December.

Explains a spokesman for the Department for Transport: "A passport lasts for four years. If a passport holder wants to run a train service they have to submit to us an expression of interest, and for Southeastern that would

be in November this year.

"All those expressions of interest would then be assessed and placed on a Department for Transport shortlist and these companies get an invite to tender. For Southeastern, this would be around spring 2017."

So far other companies which may be tempted to bid for the franchise – which must be one of those under the greatest scrutiny – are keeping their cards close to their chest.

But you can expect things to start heating up by this time next year.

Dervish Mertcan at passenger watchdog Transport Focus said: "The next franchise is not due to start until June 2018 so there isn't really much to say at this stage. But initial scoping might start later this spring or summer."

"We will want to make sure that the interests of passengers are right at the heart of the decisions being made. We will base that on the research we have carried out, primarily our National Rail Passenger Survey and Rail Passengers' Priorities for Improvements report."

"Clearly, improvements to punctuality/reliability of trains, value for money and how delays are handled will be at the top of what passengers want."

"Nearer the time we hope to carry out bespoke research about the franchise with Southeastern passengers."

Richard Freeston-Clough at London TravelWatch, the watchdog for services coming into the capital, said: "We would expect the metro-type services to operate to the standard of the London Overground and we would want

improvements to other services in line with expectations in similar franchises which are being let."

It is expected Southeastern will come under pressure from Transport for London to take over some of the Metro services in and around London which it currently provides.

Southeastern refused to answer any questions posed by Kent on Sunday this week – referring us instead to their parent company. It is the Go-Ahead Group which will make the decision on whether Southeastern will look to bid again.

But a spokesman for the Go-Ahead Group was equally as reticent as Southeastern to comment.

A spokesman told us: "As a general rule Go-Ahead doesn't make any public statement, positive or negative, with regards to its bidding activity."

Southeastern has repeatedly hit back at claims it is delivering a disappointing service and has, in recent weeks, pointed to a major investment programme it is rolling out.

In responding to criticism from the Which? survey, a spokesman said: "While the Which? report questioned fewer passengers than the recent National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS), which shows our overall customer satisfaction rate at 75 per cent, both clearly indicate we have much more to do."

"We're part way through a £70m investment programme, refurbishing our trains and stations, providing more front line employees for passengers, improving customer service training and providing more real time

information during journeys.

"The NRPS survey showed passengers have noticed, as satisfaction in these areas has risen, but punctuality is the key driver of satisfaction for most. Along with Network Rail who look after railway infrastructure such as track and signalling, we're working hard to improve punctuality and minimise delays."

An online petition set up to 'dis-franchise' Southeastern currently has nearly 17,000 signatures.

Kelly Tolhurst, MP for Rochester and Strood, said she is a commuter and knows the pain.

She said: "As many may be aware, the Southeastern franchise was extended in 2014 until June 2018. This was done under the promise of a fresh start for the service provider, but it is clear that while there have been longer carriages and the use of smartcards, many essential promises have not been kept."

"With two-and-a-half-years remaining on Southeastern's tender, I feel that now is the time to investigate and analyse what the necessary options needed for north Kent as we move forwards."

"Unfortunately, as outlined by the transport select committee, there is not enough competition from private firms wanting to run our national rail franchises, which in some circumstances can result in poorer levels of service."

■ **What do you think of Southeastern? Share your views; email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk**

Experts jet into Brazil to join Zika virus fight

Team from Medway on the ground in bid to answer how mosquitoes are spreading such a dangerous disease...

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A TEAM of scientists from Kent has flown to Brazilian city Rio de Janeiro to begin a three-year project aimed at improving understanding of the insect linked to the Zika virus.

The infection – carried by a specific form of mosquito – has caused a number of babies in South America to be born with underdeveloped brains.

The outbreak has been so severe that venues ahead of this summer's Olympic Games are soon to be inspected on a daily basis to ensure that puddles of stagnant water, where mosquitoes breed, are removed to minimise the risk of athletes and visitors coming into contact with the insects.

Now the scientists from the University of Greenwich's Medway campus are teaming up with researchers in Brazil to learn more about the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito.

The team has flown out on an introductory visit before work commences on discovering where the mosquitos lay their eggs, so that control can be better targeted.

Brazil has reported more than

4,000 cases of microcephaly – abnormal smallness of the head – over the last five months, leading the World Health Organisation to declare it a global public health emergency.

Researchers at the university are under no illusions of the importance of the work, with Gabriella Gibson, professor of medical entomology, describing the mosquito as “the most dangerous animal in the world”.

Meanwhile, research fellow and behavioural entomologist, Dr Frances Hawkes, added: “Half of the global population is at risk of a mosquito-borne disease – they have had an untold impact on human misery.”

Dr Richard Hopkins, project leader of the five-strong team from the Medway campus' Natural Resource Institute (NRI), told KoS: “We have been awarded a research grant by the Medical Research Council to work on the egg laying behaviour of the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*.”

“This is a mosquito which transmits dengue, and a range of other viruses which includes Zika.

“We are working with the mosquito that is the vector for Zika, but we are not working directly with the virus.

“We are working together with Brazilian colleagues on the way in



SHOCK: The rise in babies with abnormally small heads has prompted travel warnings for pregnant women

which female *Aedes* find and select pools of water in which to lay their eggs, and we are also investigating how the mosquitoes move within an environment.

“The ultimate aims of the research is a better understanding of how *Aedes aegypti* multiply and spread.

“In simple terms the more mosquitoes there are, the more they will spread disease.

“We are not virologists, and it is not our main area of expertise, but the dangers of the virus are also not clearly understood.

“We're looking forward to applying our joint expertise to tackle this urgent global public health issue.”

The team intends to find out what

factors make a good ‘nursery’ for the young and will also trace how far the mosquitoes are moving as they mate, feed and lay their eggs.

Developing this understanding will inform future development of targeted traps, or repellents, to reduce the incidence of people being bitten and minimise the risk of infection.

Targeted forms of control are particularly important as the mosquito doesn't usually bite at night but during the day, thus rendering bed nets ineffective.

Another important aspect of the project is the study of chemicals involved in attracting the mosquitoes to these egg-laying sites.

NRI experts will use a range of

techniques to identify which odours the insects can detect, and will focus on extracting and identifying odours that attract female mosquitoes to egg-laying sites.

These odours will subsequently be used to attract mosquitoes to traps or enhance the potency of repellents.

The team's South American partners are based at the Fundação Oswaldo Cruz in Rio de Janeiro, where the project is led by principal investigator Dr Luciano A Moreira, who specialises in the interaction of mosquitoes and the pathogens they transmit.

Much of the work will be based in Brazil, although the outcomes will be relevant throughout the affected areas.

THE TERRIFYING RISE OF ZIKA

DEATHS related to Zika are rare, and only one-in-five people infected are thought to develop symptoms, which include mild fevers, conjunctivitis, headaches, joint pains and rashes.

A rare nervous system disorder, Guillain-Barre syndrome, that can cause temporary paralysis has also been linked to the infection.

There is no vaccine or drug treatment so patients are advised to rest and drink plenty of fluids, but the biggest concern is the surge in microcephaly – the abnormal smallness of the head.

Brazil had fewer than 150 cases in the whole of 2014, but more than 4,700 cases have been reported since October 2015, with 404 confirmed and 3,670 still being investigated.

The link to microcephaly is not certain, but some governments have advised women to delay getting pregnant until more is known, while other women visiting the region have been

advised to consider rearranging their trip.

Earlier this month, the World Health Organisation's emergency committee met in Geneva to discuss the threat, and advice on how to handle it was fed back.

With regards to microcephaly and other neurological disorders, it suggests that surveillance should be standardised and enhanced, particularly in areas of known transmission and that research into the disorders should be intensified to determine whether there is a causative link to the Zika virus.

The committee also recommended that surveillance for Zika virus infection should be enhanced, development of new diagnostics should be prioritised, risk communications should be enhanced in country where the virus is transmitted, vector control and personal protective measures should be aggressively promoted and implemented and that

increased attention should be given to pregnant women.

In the longer term, it suggested intensifying research and development efforts and greater preparation of health services to cope with potential increases in neurological syndromes.

Despite all this, however, the World Health Organisation refused to impose restrictions on travel or trade with affected countries, areas and territories, but advised providing travellers with up-to-date advice on potential risks and appropriate measures to reduce the possibility of exposure to mosquito bites.

After declaring it a global emergency, the committee said that national authorities should ensure the rapid and timely reporting and sharing of information to facilitate international understanding, guide international support for control efforts, and prioritise further research and product development.



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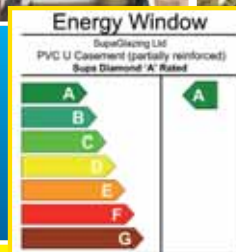
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Meet the Tory who witnessed birth of Ukip

**Craig Mackinlay on Manston, changing the way
 our councils run and beating old pal Nigel Farage**

By Chris Britcher

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IN 1991, in a busy pub in London's bustling Covent Garden, six men sat around a table and made a decision that would have one of the most profound impacts on the modern political landscape.

The Anti-Federalist League will ring few bells with many. But, two years later, when it morphed into something called the UK Independence Party, a train left the station which would gather such speed that, last May, it polled more than five million votes in the general election. More than the Liberal Democrats and Green Party combined.

Formed through a growing dissatisfaction around John Major's Conservative government and its signing of the Maastricht Treaty – which created the European Union – it was a rather academic affair.

Around the table sat the likes of Alan Sked, professor of international history at the London School of Economics and formerly of the Liberal Party.

Alongside him was a young chartered accountant growing increasingly disillusioned with the Conservative Party's shift in direction.

Today, Craig Mackinlay – now Tory MP for Thanet South – remembers clearly what it was like to be among those founding fathers. And rues on what it would become.

"I felt the Conservatives were moving away from their ideals at the time," he explains. "The party we formed was very academic and based on the same worries I have today about Europe; cost, a democratic deficit and loss of economic opportunity."

Nigel Farage, he's quick to point out, was nowhere to be seen.

The Anti-Federalist League fought a number of seats in the 1992 election and failed to get their deposit back on any of them.

Mr Mackinlay stood in his home district of Medway for the Gillingham seat and polled a grand 248 votes.

After the Maastricht Treaty was signed and sealed, the League transformed itself into Ukip

with the aim of pulling the UK out of the EU.

"I became leader for a short while in 1997," he reflects. "I could have smothered it. I had that power."

But for the founders, the cracks were already showing.

Prof Sked quit the leadership prior to the now-Kent MP's brief temporary tenure in charge. He cited a growing influence of radical, far-right opinion in the party's ranks. He also opposed plans to take up seats in the European Parliament should the party win them.

He has since become one of the current party's fiercest critics.

"Ukip turned ugly," says Mr Mackinlay. 49, as we sit a stone's throw from the House of Commons. "In 1999 when we secured MEPs the party became fractured. There were the Brussels lot with salaried staff and the rest of us. I think the party changed then."

Among 'the Brussels lot' was a certain Nigel Farage.

"I first met him some time in 1992," Mr Mackinlay recalls. "We were always a happy band of kindred spirits. Nigel was just one of

MACKINLAY ON... MANSTON AIRPORT

WE have not yet made a decision on expansion at Heathrow or Gatwick but even if one is made tomorrow, it is still going to take 10 to 15 years. And all that time you still have 10 per cent growth in airline use.

Manston can play a part in this. Freight at Heathrow should be going to Manston freeing it up for more passenger services.

There's no end-of-life dismantling for big aircraft. It all goes abroad. That's high value, advanced, high wages work we could have at Manston.

I tried to set up a budget airline in 2001 called MaMA as we were going to go from Manston to Malaga. Then 9/11 happened and all our investors pulled out.

But then EUjet came along with the wrong planes and the wrong routes. It was doomed to failure and that left a stain on the whole airport. But they were the wrong operators and if you want to ask who was responsible for Manston's failure as an airport, it was that company.

But people need to remember – once it's gone it's gone. It will never come back.



SUPPORT: The South Thanet election last year saw big names such as William Hague hit the streets

those. We were good friends. He didn't particularly stand out but made his way through the ranks."

But after the 2005 general election, Mr Mackinlay decided to run back

into the warm embrace of the Conservative Party and within months was an elected councillor on Medway Council.

So, looking back, how does he feel

about creating a beast which has proved such a poisonous thorn in the side of the Conservatives?

"In 2005 it was obvious we were just maintaining a Labour govern-

MACKINLAY ON... PORT OF RAMSGATE

YOU have to look at the size of Dover super port. It's the nearest, cheapest route and can handle the bulk. So for an operator to do something out of Ramsgate is quite a risky business step.

I think it could work on some routes, but it's never going to be easy. The market in Dover is

incredibly advanced, but there are options for a lot more passenger and some freight.

But if something doesn't happen within the next year, then I think we need to cross the rubicon and ask what else could we do with this piece of land. It could be an attractive site on the seafront.

ment. We were taking too many votes away. And, as a Conservative – or Ukip as I was then – Labour does more damage in five years in Westminster than the European Union does in 10.

"Plus, there were only 11 MEPs in Ukip and three were in prison for fraud. I thought at that point this is going off the rails.

"I'd always been a Conservative at heart – it was just in the early 1990s I felt they were moving away from their ideals – hence the reason we started Ukip."

Ten years later, and after it appeared Mr Mackinlay would permanently be the 'nearly man' of British politics (he's tried, and failed, to win at every general election since 1992 and failed to become an MEP too, not to mention losing as the Tory candidate in 2012's inaugural Kent police and crime commissioner election) he finally secured his seat at Westminster. And in the most dramatic fashion.

In a constituency which encapsulated the drama of the whole election, he looked to hold the Conservative seat vacated by Laura Sandys, who was stepping down (and, coinciden-

tally, is now one of the most vocal pro-European campaign figures). But in his way was none other than old pal Nigel Farage, who entered the race vowing that defeat would mean he'd quit as Ukip leader.

Amid a media circus, and having to face rivals such as Al Murray's comedy creation the Pub Landlord, Mr Mackinlay polled just over 2,800 votes more than Mr Farage. Helped in part, at least, by a string of the biggest Tory hitters parachuted in to give Ukip a bloody nose.

"It was particularly sweet to beat Nigel," he admits. "I knew it was going to be tight and the Conservatives needed every seat. We went into that last night still not sure if we could get a majority."

But there was little love lost between the two former comrades. They met only twice on the campaign trail and have not spoken since.

So did such assistance from Tory HQ mean he now feels compelled to toe the party line?

"I'm not the sort of person who is going to cosy up to someone in a bid to get a job," he says. "I'm 99 per cent

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

with the party. But no, I don't feel like I have to act differently."

Born in Chatham in 1966, his father ran greengrocers across the Medway towns and then went on to run an import business, bringing in fruit and vegetables.

The business spirit was strong in the Mackinlay household.

After attending Rainham Mark Grammar School, he went on the University of Birmingham to study zoology (efforts to become a doctor were foiled by being a grade short on a necessary A-level), before turning his hand to accountancy where he became a partner in a firm working out of offices in London and Rochester.

His political epiphany came when he saw clients go bust due to the recession of the early 1990s. The rest, as they say, is history.

Today he is still coming to terms with the hectic life of an MP – spending much of his time at Westminster while hurtling back to Kent whenever the whips let him out of their sight.

"Because it's such a narrow majority, the whips want you here all the time. So all those fun days of trips or factfinders are over. The whips tell you 'you cannot go'."

We're sitting in the atrium of Portcullis House – home to many an MP office and which links to the House of Commons across the road.

The glass-ceilinged place is awash with MPs and advisors meeting con-

stituents, giving tours, holding briefings; a wall of chatter and coffee cups.

He arrives 20 minutes late after being held up in a meeting with financial secretary to the treasury David Gauke and no sooner do we bid farewell does he have a group from East Kent College arriving for a meet and greet.

"I love it. It's fantastic. But it's infinitely more hectic," he admits.

In person he's quite an affable chap – easy to chat and not afraid to pass of comment on any topic thrown his way. But then if a politician can't turn on the charm when necessary where would we be?

Yet you can't really doubt his political credentials. He has, if nothing else, been consistent in his brand of Euro-sceptic Conservatism. You may not agree with him, and while cynicism should quite rightly exist for anyone who jumps from political party to party, he has always been right of centre and not afraid to say so.

Plus, at 49, it would be rather harsh to suggest he was of the career politician ilk.

The big challenge he will face is, as all new MPs do, of being seen not to become so engulfed in the world of Westminster that they appear to lose touch with their constituents. And given South Thanet's political make-up – the Tories and Ukip were hotly pursued by Labour last May – he cannot afford not to.

And one misplaced word among a community so politically active can leave a politician floundering.

"I just wish I was here five years ago," he says. "because I'm getting on a bit. It's been a long struggle to reach this point, but who would be mad enough to start a new political party? That's my own fault."

MACKINLAY ON... LOCAL COUNCILS

I WAS a councillor for eight years on Medway Council and I like the unitary platform.

If you live in a two-tier system it's more complicated.

I certainly think the concept is worth looking at for elsewhere in Kent.

Every one of the local councils across Kent all have a chief executive, all have a finance officer; why multiply all these salaries? People want to pay for services to keep the streets clean, they don't

care about their local layer they just want the services provided. So it's certainly worth a debate. I think there are savings to be.

The problem is it needs the support of councils and they're not really going to vote themselves out of a job. But conceptually it has some value.

But we had to salute local governments for balancing the books all these years. They're done a better job than central government has.

MACKINLAY ON... EUROPE

THE language in the Conservative manifesto was quite robust and powerful with lots of people.

I was completely supporting the PM during his recent EU negotiations, but as they continued, I thought it was

not really amounting to much so I then made me position clear.

But I'd say to people, forget this deal and judge on what the EU is today. If you like it, vote in, if not, vote out.



FUTURE: Should the Port of Ramsgate be transformed?



SMILES: Theresa May and Craig Mackinlay

MACKINLAY ON... BORIS JOHNSON

I THINK it's great he's joined the 'out' campaign in Europe.

Boris Johnson commands the media better than most and the media is in command

of this debate.

I think his influence is significant. I'd say he carries as much as five per cent in terms of voting intention.

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Starting gun fired in race to decide our Euro future

Does membership of the EU diminish us or enhance us? It's a question that divides the nation with politicians, business and the 'man in the street' all having a view, and although the county is Conservative our MPs are divided...

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

EUROPE. What is it good for? Absolutely nothing, plenty will claim, but others say for us to pull out would spell economic disaster and pick apart an institution which exists to promote peace and opportunity.

And in the early hours of June 24 we are likely to finally have it confirmed if we have collectively voted to stick with the European Union or opt to come out as the results of the referendum are revealed. It is likely to be close.

Because even among the Conservative dominated political landscape of Kent, the views of our MPs are split.

Currently the 'in' declared supporters have the edge, but with so many still to declare their intention, it could be swayed to back a Brexit.

But the most important thing of all to remember is that our votes count just as much as theirs. And it is up to us all to make an informed decision and then place our vote on June 23 (see box off for just how the votes will be counted).

Research published this week suggested the apparent high levels of Euroscepticism among voters may not translate into a vote to leave the union.

Fears of the impact of Brexit on the UK economy may explain the reluctance of some voters to convert their dissatisfaction with Europe into a vote to Leave, the 2015 British Social Attitudes survey indicated.

Some 22 per cent of those questioned said they wanted to leave the EU and 43 per cent said the union's powers should be reduced – a level of Euroscepticism which has been topped only once since

1992 in the regular survey.

But despite this widespread concern about the EU, a clear majority of those questioned (60 per cent) said the UK should continue to be a member, with just 30 per cent saying it should withdraw.

Just 24 per cent of those questioned by pollsters NatCen Social Research felt the British economy would be better off outside the EU, compared with 40 per cent who said it would be damaged.

NatCen senior research fellow Professor John Curtice said: "Britain is as sceptical about Europe as it has ever been, feelings that seem to be largely driven by concerns about the impact the EU is having on the nation's identity and cultural life, not least as a result of high levels of EU immigration."

"However, for most people, on its own this scepticism is not enough to warrant leaving the EU. The 'leave' campaign evidently needs to persuade more voters of its economic arguments, while 'remain' has to assure voters that the economic advantages of membership are worth

putting up with interference from Brussels."

But in Kent, often coined 'the gateway to Europe', our proximity to the continent brings many issues sharply into focus – most notably with levels of migration.

Julian Brazier, Conservative MP for Canterbury, says he will be voting to quit the union.

He explained: "We have to face up to the sheer arithmetic of Britain's spiralling population and all that means for housing shortages, the strain on our public services and infrastructure."

"A mounting overload in our primary schools shows how much worse these strains will become in the next generation. And that would be, even if we were to take charge of our borders and somehow bring migration into balance tomorrow."

Estimates suggest if we voted out it could take anywhere between two

and five years to fully extricate ourselves from the union.

But Mr Brazier is convinced it's the right thing to do.

He said: "Britain has long been proud of its commitment to the rule of law, whose cornerstone was always parliamentary sovereignty. When we joined the EEC and signed up to subsequent treaties, we accepted that, in certain carefully defined areas, we would cede ultimate decision-making powers to the European Court of Justice (ECJ), rather than Parliament."

"Since then, the ECJ has made many decisions which extend its authority well beyond those areas. This, combined with a cocktail of misguided rulings from the European Court of Human Rights and judicial activism by some of our own judges, has progressively undermined our parliament and our government. We can no longer decide on issues from the deportation of foreign criminals to

the alleged rights of home-grown ones to vote."

Unsurprisingly, South Thanet MP Craig Mackinlay, who was one of the founders of the party that would become Ukip, shares Mr Brazier's views.

He said: "I am firmly in the leave camp. My position is personal but also reflects, in my view, the prevailing feelings of the constituency."

"We have nothing to fear from a British exit. BMW, Audi, VW and Mercedes sold more than 600,000 cars in the UK in 2014. Are these companies going to stand for the EU restricting their trade with the world's fifth biggest economy? Of course not, especially when you consider the current precarious economic situation in the EU."

"International trade deals are negotiated by the EU for us, currently by a Swedish commissioner who used to be a sociology lecturer. I'm sure she is charming, but I'd rather we were in control. We contribute £19 billion a year which is £350m each week to the EU budget with mere crumbs returned."

But former cabinet member Damian Green, Tory MP for Ashford, is adamant the nation is better off 'in'.

He said: "I believe that the UK's interests are best served by remaining a part of a reformed EU because Britain is stronger, safer and more prosperous as a member."

"Britain faces many security issues including terrorism, cross-border crime and cyber-crime. By working with our European partners, Britain is able to influence key decisions, share intelligence, and coordinate

YOUR QUICK GUIDE TO MPS WHO ARE 'IN' OR 'OUT'

IN

- Damian Green (Ashford)
- Sir Roger Gale (Thanet North)
- Charlie Elphicke (Dover)
- Damian Collins (Folkestone & Hythe)
- Michael Fallon (Seven-oaks)
- Greg Clark (Tunbridge Wells)
- Helen Grant (Maidstone & The Weald)

OUT

- Julian Brazier (Canterbury)
- Gareth Johnson (Dartford)
- Adam Holloway (Gravesend)
- Craig Mackinlay (South Thanet)
- Gordon Henderson (Sittingbourne & Sheppey)

UNDECLARED

- Helen Whatley (Faversham & Mid Kent)
- Rehman Chishti (Gillingham & Rainham)
- Tracey Crouch (Chatham & Aylesford)
- Kelly Tolhurst (Rochester & Strood)
- Tom Tugendhat (Tonbridge & Malling)





Countdown to EU Referendum - June 23

You on the EU...

"DAVID Cameron stood in front of 10 Downing Street and said leaving the European Union would threaten our economic and national security.

Surely, then, to hold a referendum with even the slightest chance of a leave vote is tantamount to extreme folly?"

S Reeves, Herne Bay

"If there is one thing that has become apparent during this debate is that those who want out underline, once more, that they are the vocal minority.

Every poll suggests the public mood is to stay in, yet the bulk of letters you read in the press or those interviewed on TV are against.

Those who want to stay in should be vigilant. Keep too quiet and those easily swayed may just vote exit in the belief they are with the crowd."

June Cross, Ashford

"COULD this referendum not provide a cart before horse scenario?

If we vote to leave the EU, will we need another Thames crossing?"

Ron Cadenhead, Challock

HOW WILL THE VOTE WORK?

WE will have a lot of time visiting polling booths this year.

Not only are there local elections and the police and crime commissioner poll in May, but June 23 will see us turn out again for the EU referendum.

But how will it all work?

Richard Whitman, a professor of politics at the University of Kent, says it will look just like a general election.

He told us: "Those eligible for voting [those on the Electoral Register] will be sent a piece of paper, which they can take to their local polling station.

"They will be handed their voting slip on which they put their cross and place in the ballot box. And anyone who needs a postal vote will need to arrange that as usual."

That ballot paper asks: 'Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?'

Prof Whitman said: "Once all the votes have been cast and the stations close at 10pm, those boxes will be transported from all the polling stations to a local counting room, more often in a sports hall or other large building.

"All the ballots will be verified to ensure they are genuine and then counted. At the end of that,



there will be two piles of yes and no votes and that result will be sent to one of 12 regional count centres. More verification follows and eventually the 12 regional results will be sent to the chief

counting officer in Manchester. After yet more verification, a full result will be announced."

The electoral commission said: "Individual count results will be made public as and when they

are finalised."

The results are likely to be along Westminster constituency lines.

There are around 1.3 million voters in Kent, and costs to the government at the last referendum on alternative voting in 2011 was just over £1 per voter.

Prof Whitman said: "I would think the turnout will be something between the 42 per cent we saw at the last referendum and a general election of around 60 per cent.

"I should imagine there will be little local canvassing as most people make up their minds on how to vote based on what they see and hear in the media. It will be decided on national statements by the leading figures on both sides.

"There are so many issues to be discussed that it could be hard to form a well-considered opinion.

"Local elections are often decided on national issues and I believe this will be the same. It really is a once in a generation opportunity.

"As for the result, that could come at any time, but I can't help thinking it won't be a quick process and will be well in to Friday before we have the final announcement.

"What most people will be worried about is what happens to Britain after that."



January update from your Independent MEP for the South East Janice Atkinson



Last week I travelled to Strasbourg for one of the twelve visits we MEPs make to vote in the European Parliament. MEPs have voted to abandon this travelling circus which costs £130m per annum but it is blocked by the French.

In last week's plenary we discussed the migrant crisis - (it's on the agenda again) - it's on the agenda every month. The unelected Commission has decided that EU states will have compulsory migrant quotas imposed upon them. A German minister helpfully suggested that we impose a fuel levy to fund this issue. This is in addition to the €3bn paid to Turkey to stem the migrant flow (with no limit). Turkey also demanded (bribed) that work visas should be waived and talks accelerated for Turkey's membership of the EU. Yet still the migrants come.

MEPs agreed that external borders should be strengthened. Some EU states are well ahead of this, ie Hungary, but they face 'sanctions for inhumane actions'. You cannot win.

This month, three of the political groups asked that the sex attacks on women and school children across European cities and the media cover-ups be on the agenda. The Germans blocked the move. I spoke about it anyway.

I have visited Calais on a number of occasions and highlighted in Parliament that the majority of illegal immigrants in the camps are fit young men who are economic migrants, not refugees. Those that are genuine refugees should be returned to camps in the Middle East and north Africa to stay in their countries in safe havens and fight for their freedoms too.

We travel back to Strasbourg in early February. Again, we will discuss the crisis, much will be proposed, more British taxpayers' money will be spent but nothing done because of the inability of Parliament to recognise that the nation states and voters' views are very different to the bureaucrats' vision.

Janice

Janice Atkinson MEP
UK Delegation
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Countdown to EU Referendum - June 23



Continued from Page 19

responses to international threats.

"In terms of education, membership offers support for universities putting close to a £1bn a year into higher education funding and research alone and has given more than 200,000 students the opportunity to study or work abroad under the Erasmus programme.

"Britain and the UK economy are stronger in Europe. EU memberships is a boost for British business, supports trade, growth, jobs and investment in the UK.

"I believe that the UK should remain in the EU for all of these benefits. We have a distinct 'British model' with full access to the world's largest free trade zone, but also important opt outs which allow us to remain independent."

Dover MP Charlie Elphicke said he wants 'in' despite "practical concerns with the European project".

He said: "The EU is a huge customs union. If we left we would be subject to tariffs. As we import more goods than we export we would arguably be net beneficiaries. Yet any trade barriers will have the effect of reducing trade. The nature of the single market is that it would be easy to make it harder for us to export to Europe.

"The EU is far from perfect. Yet within it we are still able to grow strongly and benefit from the customs union, as our economic record shows. We benefit from greater certainty as regards border security. For



sure the French could cancel the treaty at any time. Yet the risk they would do so is far greater were we to leave Europe. Finally within Europe, no-one doubts our commitment to the security of the European continent.

"Were we to leave, we may very well continue to enjoy economic success. We might persuade the French that they would prefer to keep our border at Calais. We could even persuade President Putin of our continued commitment to the security of Europe.

"Yet there is great risk and uncertainty in all these matters. It is for these reasons that I currently intend

to vote to stay in the European Union."

Maidstone's Helen Grant echoed his views. The former sports minister said: "Although the EU is far from perfect, I believe this country is stronger, safer and better off 'in' both within the European context and on the global stage."

In Thanet North, Tory stalwart Sir Roger Gale says he will vote 'in' but is not actively campaigning for either side.

He said: "There is an element of 'the devil that you think you know' about my approach but I have, to date, heard nothing other than broad-

brush assertions that 'we can forge our own trade deals' and 'we can manage our own security' and 'we will be able to control immigration' from those already campaigning to leave, with nothing of substance to suggest how or why those that we have so recently walked away from will then be bending over backwards to embrace us like prodigal sons.

"The argument that 'they need us more than we need them' does not cut much ice in the real world outside Westminster. I do not think that I am prepared to take that leap of faith on behalf of those that I care about.

"I think that over the next three months there will be more than enough people peddling misinformation on both sides of the divide and from all parts of the political spectrum. I hope that the voice of the British people will rise above that and make itself heard one way or the other but decisively when it comes to the vote."

Tonbridge's Tom Tugendhat has yet to openly reveal his position, but having consistently voted in favour of having a referendum it seems unlikely he will vote to stay in.

Tracey Crouch is currently on maternity leave.

■ **What do you think? Should we stay or should we go? Share your views: email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

You on the EU...

"THE idea that the EU needs the UK more than we need them for trade is nonsense.

Nearly 50 per cent of our exports go to the EU. Ten per cent of theirs go to us.

The Brexit people appear to believe that we can have our cake and eat it - leave the EU and have free trade. This is absurd.

Why would other EU countries allow our exports to be more competitive in their markets than their own products? When we leave we will be a third country, paying the EU external tariff and subject to customs regulations."

Philip Allen, Petts Wood

"AS far as I am concerned the decision is clear. I shall be voting to come out. My reason is that approximately 70 per cent of our laws are now made for us in Brussels consequently there is little our MPs can do in Westminster; they will very soon be redundant. The keys of Westminster may just as well be thrown into the Thames.

Regarding trade, I believe we will have more freedom to trade with the whole world which can only be good for our economy if our goods and are cheap enough and good enough they will trade with us. We not be restricted by EU laws."

Tom Mason, Frindsbury

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Countdown to EU Referendum - June 23

You on the EU...

"SEEING as we've lost most of the votes in which we had an interest and the prime minister has had to get permission from 27 other countries about his minor changes, our influence appears to be close to zero.

David Cameron promised to do something about the wasteful Common Agricultural Policy, to repatriate the social and employment law and also limit immigration, none of which appeared in his negotiations, just a watered down version of other minor issues, as he saw the tide in the EU going against him.

Some influence, some say, some clout.

Not even a mention of the fishing rights given away, as Grimsby, Hull, Lowestoft, etc, all struggle with their reduced quotas.

However, anybody can believe giving over control of our country to 27 other states and paying £55 million a day for the privilege, is in our interests, really defies belief!

Phil Granger, West Malling

"NOW we have David Cameron's theatrics out of the way with his so called renegotiation with the EU we can all get on with the serious business of our withdrawal from this dictatorship.

In 1973 we made the biggest mistake of our lives when we voted to join the common market; we were lied to and misled by the government of the day and we are being lied too and misled once again by David Cameron for his own personal gain as he wants to be the next president of the EU.

They will try to put fear into the naive and gullible among the British population as did Tony Blair.

If we leave we will no longer have to pay the EU £55 million per day; we can take back our fishing grounds and our farmers can grow what they want, and we can control our own borders. The EU needs the UK more than the UK needs the EU.

We all have a chance to make Britain great again, please don't throw away this only chance we have of making things better for our children and grandchildren.

But sadly I fear we could lose this one chance because of some of the British public's apathy and strange priorities such as EastEnders and the Jeremy Kyle Show.

With our out votes we could at last make June 23 our Independence Day."

R Webb, Gravesend

Why I will be voting to leave the EU

– by Sittingbourne and Sheppey MP *Gordon Henderson*

NOW the date has at last been set for a referendum on whether Britain should remain in the European Union or leave. I very much hope that a sensible, rational public debate can take place based on facts, rather than scare-mongering or xenophobia.

Let me begin by explaining that I am of the last generation to be given an opportunity to vote in a referendum on Britain's continued membership of what was then the European Economic Community (EEC).

That referendum was held in 1975 and like many other Britons I voted to remain a member of the EEC because I am a supporter of free trade and a free European market.

I still believe such a trade arrangement is in Britain's best interests and if the EEC (which became the European Union following the Maastricht Treaty, on which the British public were never able to vote) was still about the free movement of goods and labour, then I would vote to remain a member.

But sadly, back in 1975 we were lied to. We were told joining the EEC would have no negative impact on Britain because it was only a trade agreement. We now know the Euro-

pean political elite always had as a long term objective total economic and political union. Their dream was, and still is, a Federal United States of Europe.

The European Union of which we are being asked to remain a member no longer restricts itself to trade matters. It affects every aspect of British life. It has taken from our Westminster Parliament power to legislate in many areas, including justice, policing, taxation, the environment or agriculture.

There will be some who criticise the prime minister's efforts to negotiate a different relationship with the EU and some who are disappointed with the outcome. I neither criticise Mr Cameron nor am I disappointed.

I think it was perfectly proper to attempt such negotiations, although I never held out hope of any meaningful change, which is why I am not disap-

pointed that he had such little success.

The negotiations were in many ways an irrelevance; the most important aspect of the whole charade was Mr Cameron's promise (which was included in the Conservative manifesto at the last general election, and on which I stood) that he would hold an in/out referendum following those negotiations.

There were many people who doubted he would ever hold that referendum, so I think he should be congratulated for



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Countdown to EU Referendum - June 23



delivering on his promise and I hope the doubters have the good grace to concede at least that much.

At that referendum I will be campaigning and voting for Britain to leave the EU and I will be urging my constituents to do the same.

To those who worry that leaving the EU might result in Britain losing jobs I would point out that in the last couple of years we have created more jobs than the rest of the EU put together. Does anybody really believe that being a member of the EU helped us to create those jobs?

Of course many of those jobs have been taken by migrants from other EU countries. Let me be frank. In that European free market in which we voted to remain a member back in 1975, the underlying principle is the free movement of goods and labour.

We have always had foreign workers from other European countries working in Britain, even before we joined the EU. Just think of the number of French, Italian and Spanish waiters that have always been employed in our restaurants.

So should we leave the EU any bilateral trade agreements that might be made with our European neighbours would no doubt still provide for the free movement of labour.

The difference of course, is that a Britain outside the EU could dictate the terms of how and when such workers can come to our country, whereas as a member of the EU we have to follow its rules, and as has

been seen by Mr Cameron's negotiations it is almost impossible to get the other members to change those rules to any significant degree.

Another reason to ignore the scare stories about British workers losing their jobs if we leave the EU is the amount of trade Britain does with other EU countries. We currently import more from the EU than we export. It is highly unlikely that if we leave the EU the Germans will refuse to sell us cars, the French, wine and the Spanish tomatoes.

Those countries, and all the others who export to us, would fall over themselves to negotiate a bilateral trade deal with Britain, however, we would also be able to negotiate similar deals with other non EU countries, which currently we cannot do.

Our relationship with the EU is complicated and I appreciate many people will be torn when it comes to making up their minds at the referendum. For me it boils down to one thing. Sovereignty. Who rules us?

Going back to the EEC, I accept that if you have a free trade agreement, a common market if you like, there have to be procedures in place to ensure all members of that market abide by the rules. That is what the European Commission was set up to do and I have no problem with having such a body, in which the commissioners are appointed by the national governments to ensure a level playing field.

But I fell out with the EU when it

decided to set up its own parliament, have its own flag and its own national anthem. That to me was a step too far because it demonstrated clearly the ambition of the European political establishment to have its own country.

It was also pretty obvious that a European parliament would suck power from the national parliaments of those states who joined the EU, such as Westminster. I was right and there are now few areas of government policy over which the EU has no influence.

During the next few months, as the referendum grows ever closer, we will be bombarded by propaganda and conflicting 'facts'. Many will be confused and will still find it difficult to make up their mind.

To those people I would simply say is this: ignore all the complicated arguments because the only decision you need to make is a simple one.

Do you want the laws of our land to be drafted by elected representatives who sit in a European parliament that reflects also the views of 27 other countries? If the answer to that question is yes, then you should vote to remain.

Or, do you prefer to have the laws of our land drafted by representatives who you elect to Westminster that reflects the views only of the countries that make up the United Kingdom?

If that is your position, then vote leave. That is what I will be doing.

You on the EU...

"NO-one can doubt the stamina, dedication and tenacity of the prime minister last week in Brussels and it is a great shame the EU passed up the opportunity for any true or lasting reform."

Permission to tinker around the edges of our own welfare system and talk of being excluded from "ever closer union" does not amount to fundamental reform.

Consequently, it was no surprise to see the foreign press reporting that the European Union had not granted the UK any special dispensations from its rules.

We did not get back control over our own laws nor any treaty change, and since we did not ask for any concessions on freedom of movement, mass immigration from within the European Union will continue, exacerbated almost certainly by the advent of a higher national living wage starting in six weeks time (£7.20/hr, rising to £9/hr by 2020).

In reality, even though we are outside the Eurozone, the unelected EU commission will continue to initiate new laws affecting our everyday life that we are powerless to change or repeal. EU law will continue to be supreme over UK law and when there are disputes the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg, not our own Supreme Court, will have the final say.

For all of these reasons I will be voting to leave the European Union in June. I believe decisions are best taken as close to those who are going to be affected by them as possible, and by elected politicians who we can boot out when they fail to keep their promises or we want change. Power without accountability corrupts and democracy is the best method yet invented to temper corruption, fraud and complacency in high office.

The fact that even when faced with Britain on the verge of leaving the EU has offered so little speaks volumes."

Anna Firth, Halstead

"COULD someone please explain why there is such a clamour for us to leave the EU? Do people still think we live in a world where Britannia rules the waves?"

We are just a little island with a rich history today. We are not the great powerhouse we once were. To pull out of the EU in the mistaken belief that we will somehow be restored to former glories is ludicrous.

There are, without doubt, issues with the EU – it is a bureaucratic colossus – but surely the best way is to lead from the front and call for reform for the benefit of all member states, not take our ball and go and play elsewhere?"

H Jones, Canterbury

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And the winner of the Oscar goes to... helping the next generation

Planning to stay up late to watch the movie back-slapping extravaganza that is the 88th Academy Awards from Los Angeles? You may be watching inspiration for one of the county's film students...

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

SUCCESS for Ashford-born actor Mark Rylance at the Academy Awards tonight will have a "tremendous impact" on the next generation of the county's film-makers, a top academic says.

The 88th Academy Awards take place in Los Angeles this evening - with the event taking place through the early hours.

And among the many nominated for the award is Mr Rylance, who was born in the county before his family emigrated to the US.

He has subsequently gone on to become one of the world's foremost stage actors.

Now he's enjoying success for a rare big screen outing - in Steven Spielberg's acclaimed thriller Bridge of Spies. He is nominated in the best supporting actor category. He won a Bafta for the same role just two weeks ago.

Explains Kenneth Fox, principal lecturer in film, radio and television at Canterbury Christ Church University: "It's one of the major entertainment events of the year and the fact that somebody in Kent, or the south east, is awarded or even nominated for any Oscar has a tremendous impact on young film makers, and indeed anyone who is interested in the cinema generally.

"When Andrea Arnold won is a really good example for our students who are interested in producing

films," he said.

"She won for a short film, Wasp, which is really very powerful and goes on and gets the support to make a number of different films afterwards which were pretty extraordinary."

Ms Arnold, who was born in Dartford, picked up her award in 2004 for best live action short film.

Adds Mr Fox: "Mark Rylance has got this fantastic reputation as an actor and I think that's now becoming even greater, regardless of if he wins."

He's certainly up against some tough opposition.

Also in the running are Christian Bale (for The Big Short), Tom Hardy (The Revenant), Mark Ruffalo (Spotlight) and Sylvester Stallone (Creed).

"I have a feeling Stallone might just get that," says Mr Fox.

Much of the focus since the nominations were announced was over whether Leonardo DiCaprio will finally win one of the famous statues after receiving five previous nominations but emerging with nothing.

Mr Fox says he has discussed the issue with his students.

"I teach a couple of American cinema courses so I bring up the awards.

"I'm interested in the reactions of the students when there is a film or a couple of films that you wouldn't always associate with the Academy constituents - something like The Revenant with Leonardo DiCaprio. People are interested to see if he'll win the best actor Oscar. That's created such a buzz. It's all over social media."

And he's particularly looking for-

ward to seeing who walks off with some of the less glamorous gongs.

He explains: "If you go back over the past few years the winners in the documentary category have been as extraordinary and exciting as the feature films that have won."

"If you look at the work there this year there is Amy - about Amy Winehouse - that's been getting absolutely brilliant reviews and has reached audiences in cinemas and on TV. It's a brilliantly done documentary."

According to the Kent Film Office, which looks to boost filming in the county, interest in the world of movie-making remains strong.

Film officer Gabrielle Lindemann said: "Last year productions brought in £6.9m to the Kent economy and we hope to continue that trend.

"While we exist to maximise investment by encouraging filming in the county, we always applaud home grown talent - from actors to behind the scenes production crews based in Kent.

"We support local universities and colleges in finding work experience, trainee placements or paid jobs on local and visiting productions for Kent youngsters."

■ The 88th Academy Awards from the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles, California is televised live in the UK on Sky Movies Oscars. The programme starts at 11.30pm and the ceremony is expected to begin at 1.30am UK time. The show is expected to run for around three-and-a-half hours.



PREVIOUS KENT WINNERS OR NOMINEES...

Who: Arnold Schwartzman

When: 1981

Category: Best documentary
Arnold Schwartzman grew up in Margate and, despite now living in America, frequently returns to visit the seaside town.

He refers to his time spent there as 'magical'.

He was awarded the Oscar for hard-hitting documentary Genocide, which chronicled the horrors of the Holocaust through newsreels, photographs and montages.

The documentary was co-produced by the Simon Wiesenthal Center - a museum focusing on racism in America and the history of the Holocaust.

Who: University of Kent graduates

When: 2014

Category: Best visual effects
Liam Russell, Christopher Johnston, Steve Hardy, El Suliman, Adam Ward and Mark Millena contributed to the film Gravity, securing a best visual effects Oscar.

The graduates studied at the

university's school of engineering and digital arts for degrees in multimedia, technology and design, and all work for visual effects company Framestone - who produced a lot of what appears on the screen during the film.

Who: Andrea Arnold

When: 2004

Category: Best live action short film
Wasp is a 26-minute film depicting the struggles of a single mother named Zoe, played by Natalie Press, who is bringing up four children alone as well as pursuing a relationship with an ex-boyfriend.

Ms

Arnold's home town of Dartford provided the setting for the film, which was commissioned by the UK Film Council and Channel 4.

Who: Daniel Day-Lewis

When: 1990, 2008, 2013

Category: Best actor

He was first awarded for his portrayal of Christy Brown in My Left Foot, then Daniel Plainview in There Will Be Blood and most recently Abraham Lincoln in Lincoln, making him the only man in history to have received three wins in the lead actor category.



The actor spent some of his childhood in Kent, and was sent to the independent Sevenoaks school as a boarder in 1968, when his parents are said to have thought his behaviour was 'too disorderly'.

Who: Paul Greengrass

When: 2007

Category: Best director
The film director, screenwriter and former journalist received an Oscar nomination for United 93.

Based on true events, the film tells the story of the events on United Flight 93, a passenger flight which was one of the planes hijacked by al-Qaeda on 9/11.

He attended Gravesend Grammar School and Sevenoaks School and has strong links to the county, lending his name to Gravesend's main cinema screen in The Woodville.

Who: Naomi Watts

When: 2003 and 2012

Category: Best performance by actress in a leading role
In 2003, her role in 21 Grams saw

her secure her first nomination as best supporting actress.

In 2012, her role in tsunami movie The Impossible saw her back in the running for the same award.

Born in Shoreham, near Sevenoaks, in 1968, she was first bitten by the acting bug when she saw her mother perform in the local amateur dramatics society.

Who: John Knatchbull, seventh Baron Brabourne

When: 1968 and 1984

Category: Best picture
Baron Brabourne received two Academy Award nominations for best picture as the producer of Romeo and Juliet in 1968 and A Passage to India in 1984.

He lived in the county for many years, returning to his family seat in Mersham at the end of the Second World War.

He served as governor at schools such as Wye Agricultural College and was pro-chancellor of the University of Kent.

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So just what happened to missing millions from Securitas heist?

On the 10th anniversary of the raid on the cash management depot in Tonbridge, more than £32m has never been recovered. We speak to past and present police officers on the chances of finally finding it...

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A FORMER top police officer says there is more chance of "Lord Lucan riding Shergar in this year's Grand National" than recovering the missing millions from the Securitas cash heist ten years.

Last week was the tenth anniversary of the raid which made headlines around the world.

In a daring robbery more than £53 million was stolen from the Securitas cash management depot in Vale Road, Tonbridge.

But while some cash has been recovered, more than £30m has never been found despite a number of arrests and convictions.

Speaking to KoS this week, former Detective Superintendent Nick Bid-
diss said: "The people who launder money will have wanted their share and that could be anything around 30 or 40 per cent."

"They can then sit on the cash for years until it is all but forgotten. Or they can spend those years distributing it around the world until it is all in small amounts that are impossible to trace back to the robbery."

"But the chance of getting that money back is like taking a bet that Lord Lucan will be riding Shergar in this year's Grand National. That is not to say it is impossible, but I would say after all this time it is all well gone."

He also expressed concern at how the crime had become romanticised in recent years.

He explained: "These were not romantic Robin Hood types."

"These were ruthless men who kidnapped a family, including a young child, at gunpoint and threatened them."

"There is nothing romantic about that."

The crooks could have stolen more in the raid on February 21, 2005, but their getaway lorry wasn't big enough and they had to leave millions behind – thought to be as much as £154m.

The gang posed as police and kidnapped a manager at the depot's family and threatened to kill them if he didn't get them inside.

After snatching the manager on his way to work from his home in Herne Bay, they threatened his family if he didn't agree to 'walk' the gang into the depot. Some 14 members of staff were tied up as the raid took place.

The family has subsequently had to leave their home and join a witness protection programme.

Slowly but surely, Kent Police got on top of the robbery, arrested many people and started to find money. Some £8m was in a Southborough lock-up near Tunbridge Wells.

Another £1m was found in a van dumped in the car park of the Ashford International Hotel.

Officers found cars and other vehicles, the cash cages in a Detling field, as well as guns, armour and masks.



RAID: Criminal gang targeted this building in Vale Road on February 21, 2006

But then the trails stated going cold, and today officers have all but been stood down as it becomes obvious some element of the gang has got away with it.

Seven men have, however, been convicted, and jailed, in total, for more than 100 years. But £32m remains unaccounted for.

A spokesman for the police told us: "Since 2006, Kent Police has made a number of enquiries in countries across the world which have resulted in approximately £20m of the stolen money being recovered."

"However, in the time that has passed since the robbery it is clear that a large amount of the remaining

money is now untraceable but as and when new information becomes available, we will assess it and respond to it where appropriate."

"There remains persons of interest to Kent Police and people we would like to speak to in relation to the robbery."

The chances of finding the cash as times goes on is becoming increasingly challenging.

The spokesman added: "It was a challenging and complex investigation and although there is no longer an active investigation into it, as and when new information is received by Kent Police it is assessed and responded to where appropriate."

Detective Chief Superintendent Tim Smith was one of those on the case originally, and he agrees there is little chance of tracing any cash back to Tonbridge.

He said: "In terms of the global economy, and the movement of money, it is actually a small amount of money over the course of 10 years."

"A lot of that money is now untraceable and will be very difficult to link that cash back to the robbery itself."

"But we will never stop trying and will follow all leads."

Private specialists are still acting for the insurance company that covered the Bank of England losses, and the financial activity of those convicted will be watched for years for evidence of sudden wealth.

Since the robbery there have been at least two mysterious deaths that some reports suggest could possibly be connected, something the police have never confirmed.



FIND: Police search premises in Bexley as part of probe

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Chelsea entry to go to legion village

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

AGARDEN designed for this year's Chelsea Flower Show is to be donated to a village for military veterans in Aylesford.

It will form the centre piece of a new housing development at the Royal British Legion Village site in Aylesford.

The development will provide much-needed permanent homes for injured, wounded and sick former soldiers at the village which already provides a host of industries and facilities for veterans.

The purpose built apartments, expected to be completed by the end of the year, are specifically designed to support the mobility needs of 300 ex-servicemen and women, and to help them to live independent lives.

Including a residential nursing home as well as assisted living and supported housing schemes, it also focuses on rehabilitation, with a number of activities and opportunities on offer to help those who may feel isolated re-integrate back into society.

And now it will have a garden area to be proud of after it was revealed this week the Chelsea Barracks Garden, designed by Cranbrook's leading garden stylist, Jo Thompson, will form the centrepiece of the village.

It is due to be one of the star turns at the Royal Horticultural Society's



DESIGNS: Artist's impression of how the garden will look during April's Chelsea Flower Show

most celebrated horticultural event, the Chelsea Flower Show, which takes place this April.

Sponsors Qatari Diar will also be supporting two veterans resident at the village to undertake training and gain formal qualifications in horticulture, to enable them to carry out maintenance for the garden in its new location.

James Rudoni, director of Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) Liv-

ing, said: "We are absolutely delighted by this generous donation.

"It will be wonderful to have a garden designed by Jo Thompson at the heart of our new housing development, where it will contribute to the rehabilitation and recovery of veterans who have sacrificed so much to serve their country.

"One of the RBLI's core missions is to help former members of the Armed Forces learn new skills and improve

their employability as they transition to civilian life, so we are extremely pleased that Qatari Diar is also providing an opportunity for two veterans to receive horticulture training as part of this donation."

Ms Thompson, who will be attending her eighth year at the show, said: "I am thrilled that the garden will be going to such a worthwhile home.

"The Chelsea Barracks Garden will be a traditional British rose garden,

reimagined for the 21st century.

"I very much hope it will provide ex-service personnel with a beautiful place to enjoy and a tranquil setting to reflect, as well as offering the chance for residents to get involved with a range of activities to aid their recovery."

The design is inspired by the heritage of the Chelsea Barracks site in London, the former British Army barracks, with cues taken from the architecture and landscaping of the new development, which neighbours the Royal Hospital, where the flower show has been held since 1913.

Roses, with perennial planting between, will be a main feature of the garden, and they reference the listed Garrison Chapel, with its stained glass Rose Window, which is preserved at the heart of the new development on the Chelsea Barracks site.

A spokesperson for Qatari Diar added: "We have been very impressed by the valuable work done by the RBLI to support ex-service men and women as they transition to civilian life.

"Given the important military heritage of the Chelsea Barracks site, the Royal British Legion Village in Kent seems the perfect home for the garden.

"We are delighted to secure a permanent legacy for the Chelsea Barracks Garden and to know it will make a positive contribution to this community of veterans for years to come."



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CREATIVE: Phil Gallagher stars as Mister Maker in the CBeebies show

Mister Maker brings stage show to Tunbridge Wells

Molly Kersey-Law spoke to the performer about his upcoming family show...

ARTS and craft master Mister Maker will be bringing his live stage show to Tunbridge Wells.

Phil Gallagher plays the role of Mister Maker in the CBeebies show of the same name, teaching young children how to create a variety of different things.

He will be performing his stage show – Mister Maker and the Shapes Live – at the Assembly Hall Theatre in May.

The family show features a big 'make', a number of songs and The Shapes – Mister Maker's all-dancing friends Circle, Rectangle, Triangle and Square.

The TV show has now been running for nine years.

Mr Gallagher got the part after responding to a casting call from Maidstone Studios and auditioning.

So how has the transition from screen to stage been?

"I first started with a blank canvas when I was thinking about what the show was going to be like on stage. It was quite a challenge," Mr Gallagher told KOS.

"The TV show is very carefully directed. A lot of it is close-ups of my hands and quite a lot of the time I'm making small scale things.

"We are doing such a big UK tour, going to a lot of big theatres and being watched by little ones. I wanted to bring the arts and crafts themselves to the theatre show but make it bigger so that wherever they are sat in the theatre they can enjoy what's going on stage.

"It's quite a technical show, there's a massive great big screen at the back of our set.

"When I make something on my making table and it's a small thing

we make sure that it's beamed up to the big screen so the audience members can see it if they are at the back or right at the front as well.

"I really wanted to make it a show that all ages could enjoy."

The show is being co-produced by Evolution, who Mr Gallagher has worked with during his previous panto roles at the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury.

"They are the best company for this sort of show, they are great at making family shows," he said.

"We wanted to infuse that pantomime spirit."

And he thinks that children, and even adults, can gain a lot from taking part in arts and crafts.

"The main thing is gaining confidence. There's no right or wrong answer with arts and crafts.

"It's all about people's creativity and just having a go.

"No matter how it turns out you should be proud of what you've made," he said.

He said that he is looking forward to performing in Kent, where he currently lives.

"Any time that I'm not in a spotty waistcoat and dancing around on a stage somewhere I'm back in Kent," he said.

"I live in Gillingham, I was born in Rainham and went to school there. Then I went to Canterbury Christ Church University.

"With this tour I can work and be back in Kent, which is so rare."

The show will be performed on May 14 at 1.30pm and 4pm.

Tickets are £13.50 for adults and £10 for children.

For more information or to book you can call the box office on 01892 530613 or visit www.assemblyhall-theatre.co.uk.

» Email us details of your event to: editorial@kosmedia.co.uk
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Kits Coty Aylesford

KITS Coty Brasserie is a family-owned Kent restaurant that has been in the same ownership for more than 30 years and has evolved considerably in that time.

Perfectly situated on Bluebell Hill, the spectacular views over the Weald of Kent are breathtaking.

The 45 seat private dining room continues to be popular for family events and the whole venue is bookable for your exclusive wedding.

Music evenings have also been a very popular addition.

Michael Buble tribute Jason Allen will be performing there on April 22.

The event includes a three-course menu and will cost £35.50.

For more information, you can visit www.kitscoty.co.uk.

Your guide to six Kentish places to eat

WITH Spring approaching, bringing with it lighter evenings and warmer weather, many people in the county will be looking for somewhere where they can make the most of it and enjoy some good food.

And Kent is certainly not short of great places to eat.

The county prides itself on the top quality vegetables that it grows, as well as its Dover sole and Romney Marsh lamb.

Kent gained its Garden of England title due to the wide range of produce that local farmers and fishermen are able to bring to the table.

What's more, a selection of locally brewed beers, ciders and wines are available and will offer you the perfect accompaniment to your meal.

A number of cafes and restaurants can offer you a relaxed setting to enjoy your food and drink – complete with some beautiful surroundings.

Whether you are looking for somewhere to eat near to the bustling city of Canterbury, or you would like to enjoy a meal somewhere that boasts stunning views of the countryside, Kent has plenty for you to choose from.

Here is our guide to some of the cafes and restaurants in the area offering a variety of good food.

Find out about six of the best restaurants in the county, where you can shelter inside on chilly days or enjoy the sunshine when the weather improves.



The Granville Canterbury

THE Granville's aim is to make everyone feel welcome and enjoy their time with them, whether it be for a drink or a meal.

They have a fantastic menu, offering simple yet imaginative dishes using the best ingredients at affordable prices. They have a daily set lunch menu, along with a selection of small plates, platters, mains and a children's menu.

They serve traditional Kentish ale and distinctive international lagers and offer a good selection of wine by the glass. They are open noon to 11pm, Monday to Saturday, with last food orders at 9.30pm, and from noon to 5pm on Sunday.

Visit www.thegranvillecanterbury.co.uk for details.



Tyler's Kiln Canterbury

ON a cold or rainy day, sink into Tyler's Kiln's sumptuous leather armchairs and make yourself at home next to their roaring kiln fireplace with your favourite tipple.

There is tea, coffee or hot chocolate on offer, all served with some freshly baked shortbread.

Feeling peckish? Why not try their mouth-watering lunch and evening menus or, on Sundays, a traditional roast with a choice of four meats or a vegetarian option.

A children's menu and small sandwiches are also available for those with smaller appetites.

Regular events include a

steak and wine night every Tuesday (£19.95) and a pie and pint night every Wednesday (£13.25).

There is live music on the first Sunday of every month at 5.30pm, and entry is free.

A pub quiz also takes place on the last Monday of each month.

Opened in January 2015 after an extensive two year refurbishment project, this truly unique country pub located in the hamlet of Tyler Hill has remained the top pub in Canterbury and surrounding areas on TripAdvisor for the last 10 months.

For more details, visit www.thetylerskiln.co.uk.



Shad Herne Bay

SHAD restaurant offers truly authentic Indian food with a modern approach.

Established in 2005, Shad has now grown to become one of the most popular Indian restaurants within the Herne Bay area and they were recently voted Kent's number one restaurant by What's On readers.

The team are obsessive about the use of local ingredients and spices and never compromise on quality.

They also pride themselves on the service one would expect.

For your enjoyment they offer a lavish menu with mouth watering dishes, and also cater for patrons with a gluten intolerance.

Home delivery is also available locally for a cosy night in.

For further details about what Shad restaurant has to offer, you can visit www.shadhernebay.co.uk.



Waggon at Hale Chatham

THE Waggon at Hale is an independent, family-run traditional pub situated on Capstone Road.

Emma and her team are on hand to offer you a warm and friendly welcome, whether you are looking for somewhere to have a good old pint of real ale or a glass of wine, or looking to dine on their freshly-prepared food served all day every day.

The Waggon at Hale has a wide range of tasty meals and snacks available, whether you choose to eat in the restaurant or in the pub itself.

Items on the bar menu include an 8oz rump steak, the Waggon ultimate burger

and a mushroom and halloumi stack.

Food on the restaurant menu includes butterflied chicken, Moroccan spiced lamb rump and Sicilian butternut squash and chickpea stew.

They also have a regular range of specials, which change daily depending on local supply.

These specials can be viewed on the chalk boards which are situated in the pub and restaurant.

For more information about Waggon at Hale you can visit their website at www.waggonathale.com or call 01634 400800.



The Brown Jug Upchurch

THE Brown Jug is a friendly local public house with the added bonus of excellent home cooked food.

The imminent re-launch now boasts an expansion of the food side of the business and offers an improved and extended menu, which are all made fresh and from locally-sourced ingredients.

There is a clean and quiet beer garden surrounded by orchards, with wheelchair access.

The beer garden also has a gate with a latch so the children can run around until the sun sets.

A traditional Sunday lunch offers four meats and two vegetarian options.

A selection of lunchtime and evening bar snacks are also available.

For more information about The Brown Jug and what they have to offer you can visit www.thebrownjugupchurch.co.uk.

Cartoonist swaps comics for canvas and unveils exhibition

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersy-law@archant.co.uk

A CARTOONIST who decided to swap comics for canvas and launch his fine art career will be exhibiting his work in Greenhithe.

Craig Davison unveiled a new exhibition of his work at Castle Galleries in the Bluewater Shopping Centre last week.

The exhibition features his new limited edition collection Timberlyne, alongside a selection of originals.

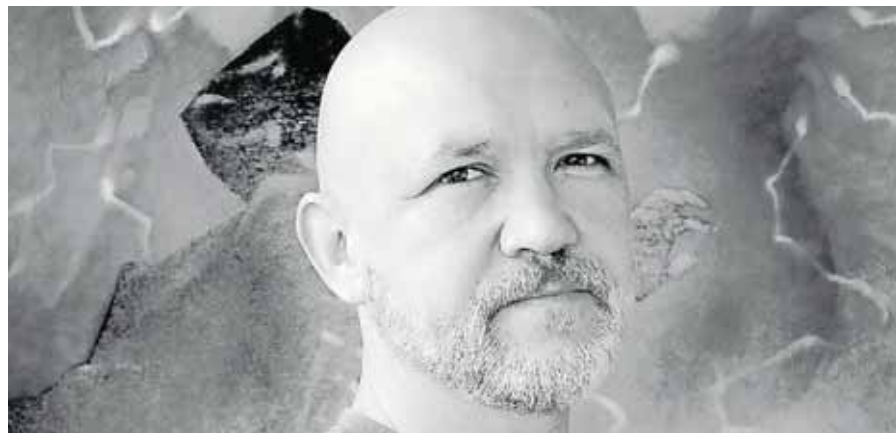
Mr Davison began his artistic career working as a cartoonist and designing pre-school comics.

He later became an animator and games designer and began sculpting reference figures for 3D animation.

He entered a competition for aspiring artists run by art publishers Washington Green Fine Art, and was signed by them in 2007.

At the centre of his collection at Castle Galleries is his work depicting a young girl steering a bison through the wilderness.

Mr Davison explained: "The idea for this collection – and the charac-



EXHIBITION: Craig Davison's work is currently being exhibited in Greenhithe

ters at the centre of the collection – was born when I was walking my dogs in the woods.

"Ultimately it's down to the viewer to guess what the relationship between them is, where they're going and where they've come from.

"It's an illustration for a story that hasn't been written."

Gallery manager for Bluewater's Castle Galleries, Peter Gilby, said: "Craig's new work demonstrates a

real departure from his previous subject matter – it is the most personal collection that Craig has produced in his career to date.

"Inspired by the natural environment and the lack of artificial light found in the wilderness, Timberlyne demonstrates a clever use of chiaroscuro – the extreme contrasts of light and shade employed draw the viewer's eye towards the little girl, ensuring this heroine-

like figure is kept firmly in the spotlight."

The exhibition will be running for two weeks, ending on the weekend of March 5.

His work will be available to buy either from the exhibition or online.

■ **For more information about Mr Davison's work you can visit www.castlegalleries.com.**

Lord of the Flies on stage

WILLIAM Golding's *Lord of the Flies* will be performed at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, from March 15 to 19.

For more details, or to book, call the box office on 0844 871 7620.



Chilling Harold Pinter play

HAROLD Pinter's chilling play *Old Times* will be performed at the Bromley Little Theatre from June 16 to 19.

It tells the story of Anna's visit to her old friends Deeley and Kate.

Performances take place at 7.45pm.

To book, call the ticket line on 03336663366.

Russell Kane talks age

COMEDIAN Russell Kane will bring his new show – *Right Man, Wrong Age* – to the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on March 21 at 8pm.

Tickets are £17.

To book, call 01322 220000.



Tale of search for future

SHOW Cartography will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate on March 31.

Presented by Flickbook Theatre, it tells the story of Sarah and John, who are looking for a future when they meet each other.

The show will start at 7.30pm.

Call 01843 292795 for more details.

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Gates stars in music show

MAD About Musicals, starring singer Gareth Gates, will be performed at the Margate Winter Gardens on May 31. The show starts at 7.30pm and tickets are £22. To book, call 01843 292795.



Comedian talks money

COMEDIAN Simon Evans will be bringing his new show – In The Money – to the Folkestone Quarterhouse on April 22. The performance starts at 8pm and tickets are £14 or £12 with concessions. For further details, or to book, call the box office on 01303 760750.

Jackson's hits on stage

TRIBUTE show Forever Jackson will be bringing the hits of Michael Jackson to the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, on March 4 at 7.30pm. For more details, visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone.



Swan Lake in Maidstone

THE Vienna Festival Ballet will be bringing their Swan Lake production to the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone. It will be performed on April 14 at 2pm. Tickets are £20 or £17 with concessions. For more details or to book visit www.parkwoodtheatre.co.uk.

Musical show That'll Be The Day is in Dartford

By Molly Kersey-Law
molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

FEATURING hits from the 50s, 60s and 70s, musical show That'll Be The Day will be performed in Dartford next month.

The variety show, which features both music and comedy, is now in its 30th year of touring. Trevor Payne first created the show in 1987 and he has continued to direct, produce and star in the production – taking on roles such as Rolling Stones' frontman Mick Jagger and performing as many as 230 shows a year.

Mr Payne re-writes the show for each new tour, spending some six months preparing the latest production before the tour begins.

"It's always a challenge to change the show every year but it's been one of the main reasons for That'll Be The Day's success," he said.

"Change is good, how else could we have progressed? As for retirement I'm not considering it.

"I remember meeting the great Bobby Charlton in Malta, we were having a chat after playing tennis and he said his one regret was



retiring too early.

"He said being a manager was the next best thing but nothing gives you the thrill of playing. I won't make that mistake."

The show supports a number of charitable causes, including military charity Help For Heroes and Make-A-Wish, which grants wishes to children and young people who are fighting life-threatening conditions.

Mr Payne added: "We are truly delighted to be supporting Make-A-Wish.

"The tireless work they do with children across the UK is inspirational and we look forward to a long and fruitful association with this amazing charity."

That'll Be The Day will be performed at the Orchard Theatre on March 22.

It will be starting at 7.30pm and tickets are £26.

For more information or to book tickets to the performance you can visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

Alternatively you can call the ticket office on 01322 220000.



MUSICAL: Trevor Payne as Mick Jagger. Credit: Ian Richards



VARIETY: A number of hits will be performed in the show

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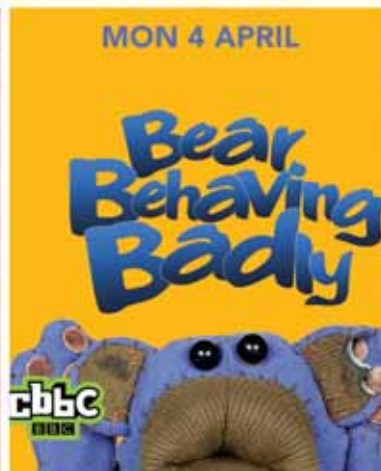
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Davina's latest cookbook seeks to simplify carbs

The TV presenter speaks about renewing her wedding vows in Las Vegas and her latest cookbook....

AFTER 15 years of marriage, Davina McCall surprised her husband Matthew by arranging to renew their vows in Las Vegas last Spring.

Romantic as it sounds, the TV presenter and fitness fanatic insists it was quite the opposite. In fact, the whole day was a family affair, with their three children – Holly, 14, Tilly, 12 and nine-year-old Chester – secretly writing the vows on the plane, and two 'really great friends' who couldn't come to their wedding in 2000 joining in on the surprise.

"I said to Matthew, 'We're going to renew our vows', and his face sort of fell," Ms McCall recalls with a laugh.

"He said, 'Oh my God, that's so

cheesy. No!'

"I said, 'Darling, we're just going in our clothes, you don't have to change into anything, we're going to have a real laugh, the kids have written the vows', and he went, 'Actually, that's quite cute', and we all piled down to the Little White Chapel and laughed our way through our wedding vows.

"It was brilliant because it was very casual, we didn't make it into a great big thing."

Ms McCall, who can currently be seen hosting Channel 4's winter sports show The Jump, is a dab hand in the kitchen, recently adding another healthy-eating cookbook to her repertoire. Written out of frustration at the confusing advice surrounding carbohydrates, Davina's Smart Carbs



HEALTHY: Davina McCall has released a new cookbook

seeks to simplify the issue.

"I've always been telling everybody about eating a balanced, healthy diet [one that includes carbs], and then I suddenly thought, 'Have I been telling people the wrong thing?' Then a nutritionist told me that there are good carbs and bad carbs, and we came up with this idea of smart carbs.

"It makes total sense; there are smart carbs, ones that are good for us - and there are some very simple changes we can make."

These changes include swapping white bread, rice and pasta for brown varieties and using sweet potato in place of regular spuds.

Ms McCall recalls how she thought her kids would 'balk' when she first made a chicken crumble with a cauli-

flower, quinoa and Parmesan topping - but actually they loved it.

"It's interesting, you think, 'Oh well, the kids aren't going to like it', but the kids have got more adventurous with the new stuff I give them."

She acknowledges mealtimes can be a battleground, however.

"I've got three kids and quite often, two of them like something and one of them doesn't. I don't make them something different - I just say, 'Have some of the veg and have a bit more of this if you don't like that'.

"I always try and get them to try it. The more somebody tries something, the more likely they are to like it in the end."

Davina's Smart Carbs is available to buy now.

Watson takes to stage

SINGER Russell Watson will be performing at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on May 13.

The show - Songs From The Heart - will feature local choir group inChoir.

He will perform a number of his well-loved songs as well as selected tracks from his upcoming album.

The show will start at 7.30pm.

To book, call 01892 530613.

A world of inventions

FAMILY show Monstersaurus will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate on May 15.

The show tells the story of Monty, who creates a world of wacky inventions and incredible monsters.

Presented by Big Wooden Horse, it features original music.

The show starts at 2pm and tickets are £6. Call 01843 292795 to book tickets.

A horticultural talk

THE Cobham Gardeners' Society will be hosting a horticultural talk in March.

Ann Storey, of the Kent Tree and Pond Partnership, will be talking about the creation and maintenance of garden ponds.

The talk will be held at the Meadow Room in Cobham on March 9.

It will begin at 7.30pm.

Entry is free for society members and £3 for non-members.

Artist discusses work

ARTIST Gail Brodholt will be giving a talk at the Lombard Street Gallery, Margate, on March 5.

The event coincides with the Power of Women (POW) Thanet International Women's Week and will start at 2pm.

It is expected to last around 40 minutes, with the opportunity to ask questions and view her work.

Admission to the event is free.

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Some supersized skiing in Austria

TRAVEL REVIEW: Austria

By Pete Thompson

IN the idyllic ski region where James Bond wreaked havoc in the latest 007 blockbuster *Spectre*, I have taken on a mission of my own to discover one of Tirol's best-kept secrets.

Careering down steep slopes in the heart of the Austrian Alps, my pulse races as I glance back to spot a figure on the horizon in hot pursuit.

The sound of explosions had earlier reverberated around the valley, but now all I can hear is the wind whistling past as I hurtle down the mountain at full tilt.

There's not even a sniff of trouble when I return to the quaint resort of Fieberbrunn, my mission for the day accomplished. The blasts I'd head were in fact detonations to prevent an avalanche, rather than 007 and an assassin trying to kill each other.

Daniel Craig's daredevil adventures have brought thousands of skiers to Soelden in the Otztal Valley, but a couple of hours' drive away is a dreamy resort set to attract an increasing number of thrill-seekers.

Tucked away in the Kitzbuhel Alps, it will no doubt be a mystery to many who frequent the more mainstream ski resorts. But the opening of the Tirol-S gondola should put Fieberbrunn firmly on the map, making it part of Austria's largest interconnected ski area, with a whopping 270 kilometres of pistes.

Decades after the idea was first discussed, the addition of the high-speed gondola to connect the slopes of Fieberbrunn with the Salzburgerland resorts of Saalbach, Hinterglemm and Leogang finally came to fruition last December.

Now winter sport enthusiasts are spoilt for choice, regardless of ability.

Mother Nature also smiles on this



IDYLLIC: The slopes around Fieberbrunn.

stunning part of the world, which has been dubbed a 'snow hole' due to the vast quantities of the white stuff. The PillerseeTal, where Fieberbrunn is located, is regarded as the most snow-assured region in Tirol - and within 24 hours of my arrival, a metre of snow has fallen.

Fieberbrunn annually hosts the only Freeride World Tour event to be staged in Austria or Germany, with daring skiers descending 620 metres

on the daunting north face of the Wildseeloder mountain at a gradient of up to 70 degrees.

While dicing with death on the Wildseeloder was never going to be on my itinerary, the vast and varied ski area now accessible by the Tirol-S gives me plenty of opportunity to go beyond my comfort zone.

Rapid, steep red runs get the blood pumping as I ease myself back into the swing of things two years after I

had last clipped into a pair of skis, and I'm soon heading off piste.

My reward for pushing back the boundaries is some traditional Tirolean cuisine at the Wildalpgatterl restaurant. I order fried chicken and potato salad in the homely archetypal Austrian ski hut as my burning thighs take a much-needed rest.

Later that evening, I skip apres ski in favour of a guided hike. According to legend, Fieberbrunn got its name

TRAVEL FACTS

PETE Thompson was a guest of Inghams who has introduced the resort of Fieberbrunn in the PillerseeTal to their ski programme for the first time. A week's half board at the four-star Austria Trend Hotel Alpine Resort starts from £869 per person, including flights from Gatwick to Salzburg and resort transfers.

For details, visit www.ingham.co.uk.

when the Princess of Margarete von Tirol was recovering from a fever after drinking water from a fountain beneath the church in the town - 'Fieber' and 'Brunner' meaning fever and fountain in German. I pass that very place of worship before returning to the warmth of the Austria Trend Hotel Alpine Resort.

The ski in, ski out hotel is perfectly located and offers a pool with a view of the piste, a sauna and the option of a massage if the skiing has taken its toll. But I have no intention of putting my feet up on my final day, when a short ride on the Tirol-S offers one last foray over to Saalbach.

Meandering blue runs allow me to marvel at spectacular sun-kissed peaks, while challenging reds have my jaw dropping again for very different reasons.

Romantic mountain huts appear ever closer as I descend into vibrant Saalbach, then I head back up for lunch in the cosy refurbished Reiteralm, in front of a roaring fire.

A potent shot of schnapps sends me on my way and ignites my engine for the rest of the day. I even allow myself a little Bond-style swagger knowing I have unearthed a gem of a resort, which won't remain a secret for long.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



TRIPLE 9 (15, 116 mins) Thriller/Action

THERE is no limit to what desperate men will do... when pushed.

So says a gangster's wife in John Hillcoat's taut action thriller set on the mean streets of Atlanta, where the lawmakers brandishing police badges are just as corrupt as the

wastrels they put behind bars.

It's a familiar set-up and *Triple 9* doesn't deviate wildly from expectations, but while this fast-paced game of cops and robbers might not have originality in its arsenal, it is blessed with a stellar cast and a robust script penned by Matt Cook.

He has a sharp ear for snappy dialogue and cranks up the tension with confidence, punctuating numerous double and triple-crosses with muscular and propulsive set-pieces that invariably end in a hail of bullets.

Mr Hillcoat's previous film, the Depression-era thriller *Lawless* starring Tom Hardy, was an exercise in period style and blood-spattered machismo.

High levels of testosterone also course through the bulging veins of *Triple 9*, particularly when the criminal fraternity posture and brawl to remind one another that

there is no honour between thieves.

At the heart of this man's world is venomous moll Irina Vlaslov, who takes charge of the Russian-Israeli mob while her husband Vassili languishes behind bars.

She puts the squeeze on private security contractor Michael Belmont and his team of dirty cops and Special Ops veterans.

Michael fathered a child with Irina's sister Elena and is beholden to the Vlaslovs if he wants access to his boy. Irina insists that Michael and his accomplices pull off the heist of valuable computer files from a safe house.

It's an impossible task within a three-minute window before police respond to an emergency call, so Michael, homicide detective Jorge Rodriguez, street cop Marcus Atwood and brothers Russell and Gabe Welch decide to buy themselves extra time with a distraction. They will kill rookie



cop Chris Allen, the nephew of Sergeant Detective Jeffrey Allen, and while the entire police department responds to reports of an "officer down", the rest of the gang will carry out the theft without fear of arrest.

Triple 9 exerts a strong grip on our attention. It's not vice-like for the entire two hours - there's a noticeable lull as Mr Cook knits the

various strands of his sinewy plot into place - but the chilling threat of violence clouds every frame.

Black humour offsets the brutality like when a bank manager whimpers that robbers forced him to open the safe by brandishing pictures of his family and Harrelson's detective retorts, "Be careful what you Insta-Google-tweet-paste."

THERE are many gifts for gardeners on Mother's Day - but personalising them can make all the difference. Whether you want a gift monogrammed or inscribed, or even want to find a plant named after your mum, there are plenty of gifts to choose from.

Name of the rose: Try www.giftaplant.com, which has a wealth of feminine-named roses including Penelope, Sarah, Nicola, Lisa, Jill and Carol, as well as a host of other plants including wild geraniums, camellia, agapanthus and hibiscus named after women.

Perhaps the perfect choice is the hybrid tea rose 'Mum in a Million', a pink variety with perfumed blooms from summer through to autumn, available from specialist rose grower Style Roses.

A bare root is £11.95 and a bush rose potted is £13.95.

To purchase visit www.styloroses.co.uk or call 01406 424089.

'Loving Mum', a vibrant, lightly-scented orange tea rose, and 'My Mum', a floribunda with red blooms and silver reverse, are also ideal gifts from Style Roses.

Awesome apron: Have a name or message embroidered on to a handy gardening apron, ideal for holding secateurs, string, plant markers and other ephemera and available in green, pink or black

Personalised aprons are available for £14.99 from www.gettingpersonal.co.uk.



PERSONALISED: There are a number of gifts available, including aprons from www.gettingpersonal.co.uk

Making Mother's Day personal

The apron has a handy double pocket on the front for gardening tools, and the front is beautifully embroidered with a stylish flower design in a thick, white stitch. Add any name, up to 12 characters, and any message, up to 18 characters.

Thanks a bunch: Feed her need to plant with this 'Thanks A Bunch, Mum' plant set, featuring a gift box

personalised with your own custom message. Inside is a terracotta pot, instructions, seed paper confetti, coir compost disc and pewter 'Thanks a bunch, Mum' plant marker.

Choose from seed paper confetti in white forget-me-nots, green (basil and parsley) or yellow (mixed flowers) for £15 from www.notonthehighstreet.com.

Cool tip: There are many gimmicky, pretty fork and trowel sets on the market, but this tough-quality carbon steel set from Big Little Things provides style as well as sturdiness and can be personalised with a name or message as well.

The handles are made from ash timber with leather wrist straps included. The personalised message

will be the same on both the fork and trowel handle, while the set comes in a presentation box. They are £24.95 from www.biglittlethings.co.uk.

All gloved up: Treat her to a pair of gorgeous monogrammed leather gardening gloves which will keep thorns at bay and look stylish at the same time. They can be personalised. £39.99 from www.buyagift.co.uk



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Learn a trade and earn salary

With National Apprenticeship Week on the way, we take a look at some of the exciting courses on offer in the county

If you are finishing school and feel unsure about what you want to do next, or if you're hoping to change career, there could be many advantages to carrying out an apprenticeship.

National Apprenticeship Week, which is co-ordinated by the National Apprenticeship Service, runs from March 14 to 18 and aims to celebrate apprenticeships and the positive impact that they have on individuals, businesses and the economy.

There are a large number of apprenticeships on offer throughout the county.

Apprenticeships allow you to work while you gain qualifications, meaning that you will be simultaneously earning a wage and learning a trade.

You will be able to gain knowledge and experience of how your chosen industry works, building up skills and progressing in the field.

As well as being paid a wage, you will also be able to take holiday throughout the year – just like the business' other employees.

What's more, you will have people on hand to give you support and advice when you feel you need it.

Many of Kent's colleges offer apprenticeships in a variety of different subjects.

The Leigh UTC in Dartford allows students to gain practical experience and has a number of business partners such as Eurostar and the Royal Navy.

The technical college's curriculum covers a range of engineering skills

LEARN AND EARN: Gain skills and knowledge through an apprenticeship



which are required in their partners' businesses.

Their ICT curriculum covers subjects such as software architecture, systems design, programming and database integration.

East Kent College, which has campuses in Folkestone and Dover, offers apprenticeships in 25 different areas including engineering and health and social care.

MidKent College has centres in both Gillingham and Kent and offers intermediate, advanced and higher apprenticeships to those over 16.

Their apprenticeships cover areas such as plumbing and heating, surveying, hairdressing and customer service.

The Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, which promotes and supports businesses around the

county, offers a variety of apprenticeships too.

To find out more, visit their website on www.kentinictachamber.co.uk.

Carefully consider your options and talk to a teacher or careers advisor about the profession you want to go into and the best way to achieve this.

If you do decide an apprenticeship is the best way forward, you have plenty of options.

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Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce are holding a series of **Your Future** events, which are part of a government funded national project to deliver a series of 250 events attracting 70,000 young people across England.

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Range of opportunities on offer at NHS

THE Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust offers a number of different apprenticeship programmes in areas such as dental nursing, IT and health and social care.

Hannah Millard became an apprentice there in 2014.

Emma Darvill, a senior employee relations adviser for the trust, speaks about how Miss Millard got on and the benefits of apprenticeships...

"Our team's first experience of working with an apprentice was when we took on Hannah in September 2014.

"Hannah's apprenticeship included Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship in business administration, which she completed in September 2015.

"At the outset the team wanted the opportunity to encourage and develop someone new to the NHS and see how the programme worked for the team as a whole.

"It's been very successful. What we've given to Hannah, in terms of encouragement and extra opportunities to learn, we have earned back twice over.

"From the beginning she was committed to succeeding and really

“ Taking on an apprentice is a benefit, not a chore. There was little for me to do as her manager ”

Emma Darvill, manager

engaged with the whole department.

"Hannah came to us from the retail sector but was seeking a career change. She wanted to put everything she had into it.

"Her approach has always been fresh, energetic and she's always very keen to learn. She made things easier for the rest of the team by being an additional resource – whatever the task at hand was.

"We were always confident that she would complete any task to a high standard. Sometimes having Hannah on the team almost felt like a luxury.

"For example, having a highly competent extra person available to take minutes at meetings.

"We promoted Hannah to employee relations officer after just eight months with us; before completing her apprenticeship.

"She would always think and learn beyond her job description in order to fulfil the apprenticeship assignments that she was working on and this gave her a particularly good skill set.

"She has monthly visits from a tutor and each month would bring a new set of learning challenges which she tackled successfully.

"The fact that she began her career with the NHS this way means that we have been able to mould her development in a way that really meets the needs of our department and the organisation overall.

"Taking on an apprentice is a benefit, not a chore. There was really very little additional work for me to do as her manager.

"I have regular one-to-one sessions with all the employees I line manage and Hannah was no different and the paperwork was minimal.

"Helping someone to develop is very worthwhile. In return I have a proficient member of staff, a real high performer who I know will deliver what the team needs."

■ For more details about apprenticeships call the National Apprenticeship Service on 08000 150 600.



WORTHWHILE: Emma Darvill (left) and apprentice Hannah Millard (right)

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Negativity could scupper revival

IN response to your article last week on Manston Airport, it is to be regretted that such scepticism abounds, particularly from those who have been so prominent in the fight for Manston Airport.

It is a wonder that any potential investor would want to invest in Manston Airport when faced with such negative views as those reported in last week's KoS.

It is neither welcoming nor open minded. The quotes in the report were negative and depressing with phrases such as 'cautiously cynical', 'reservations', 'an exercise intended to fail' and 'we hope these are real investors'.

You would think true supporters of the airport would be jumping for joy at the prospect of more interest but all we hear are denials and criticism. Some people's reaction to this exciting and positive news is frankly beyond belief.

Thanet District Council have, so far, acted assuredly and prudently, and adhered to their pre-election pledge, in making sure that they attract the most appropriate and financially sound investor for the airport.

The Supporters of Manston Airport welcome any investor who has the appropriate capital, together with a viable, long term business plan to operate a thriving airport. These investors should be welcomed with open arms by those that wish to see a thriving airport in Thanet with all groups and elected politicians working together towards this mutually desired conclusion.

Ruth Bailey,
 Chairman, Supporters of Manston
 Airport group

Political game over airport?

PEOPLE not familiar with Sir Roger Gale's previous involvement in attempts to force a change in ownership of the land formally occupied by Manston Airport would be forgiven for confusion about whether Sir Roger actually wants aviation to return to Manston, or whether he is now acting as official spokesman for the US property investment fund managers, RiverOak.

Surely if he was really committed to the return of aviation to Manston he'd be standing four-square behind Chris Wells' UKIP administration? It appears Sir Roger has some ulterior political or

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Failure for years so what's different now?

I HAVE just read your article about the three new secret candidates who are allegedly vying to underwrite Thanet District Council's compulsory purchase (CPO) of the site of the former airport at Manston [KoS, last week].

I am left wondering when this farce is going to end. Any cursory examination of the facts reveals that it isn't going to be possible to pursue a compulsory purchase of the site at this time.

Compulsory purchase powers are limited and can only be used where the purchase can be justified. Remember, we are talking about taking someone's property from them. The council would be required to make a compelling case in the public interest. No such case has been made and no such case can be made.

After 15 years of straight losses, it isn't going to be possible to claim that reopening Manston will produce economic benefits for east Kent. When it was open the airport employed fewer people than the new Sainsbury's at Westwood Cross. In addition, it isn't going to be possible to demonstrate there are any environmental benefits to be attained by reopening the airport. Airports and the attendant traffic are one of the most highly polluting forms of industry.

In your article you mentioned RiverOak who are working with Roger Gale to try to evade the local planning authority by applying directly to government to take the site using a develop-

ment consent order (DCO). What a triumph for local democracy this would be.

Can anyone explain why a long-standing MP would be promoting a US property developer with no relevant experience of running airports?

This is a company which has already failed in their application to become Thanet District Council's indemnity partner, because they couldn't demonstrate that they had the funds to underwrite the deal. RiverOak's bid depends on them being able to prove that reopening Manston is a project which can be classed as a major national infrastructure project. How can a thrice-failed airport be classed as significant, and how can it be of any national significance when the only impact of its closure was to see a handful of freight planes being diverted to Southend each week?

What we are looking at is a political game. Everyone involved knows full well that they can never justify reopening the airport, either, using a CPO, or, using a DCO. All they are doing with their never-ending game is undermining the legal owners in their efforts to redevelop the site and to attract new clients. Maybe that's the plan?

The people of east Kent urgently need elected representatives who will listen to the alternatives and will not just stick their fingers in their ears, singing "La la la."

Peter Binding
 via email

personal motives hiding behind his pro-aviation rhetoric.

Robert Bird,
 via email

Many promises but little resolve

I AM afraid to say I share in the scepticism over Manston. The reason for this is purely because of the track record of the council in being honest with us and this is really directed at the leader of Thanet District Council, Chris Wells.

It is quite clear by now that a large portion of the population of Thanet want the airport open and because of that strong feeling Ukup found themselves in control of the council. Unfortunately, this is where it started to go wrong as Chris Wells did not keep to his pre-election word on this issue.

Back in October/November, Cllr Wells was caught on camera stating four new investors have expressed an interest in Manston. On further investigation it turns out the council have no record of these investors at all. When asked about this by the BBC he replied that he was approached verbally, really?

A short time after this, Nigel Farage came to the area to pay us a visit and with him came the promise of an exciting announcement of a potential new investor. As of today's date we have not had an announcement of any kind.

Ruth Bailey of the SuMA told me the council have no record of the investors because the council are not the ones dealing with it. It is more than obvious they are and I have since received advice that contradicts her statement.

With all the smoke and mirrors over this it remains to be seen what will happen. Although I wish our beloved airport to reopen, I am afraid my sceptic approach will remain until I see otherwise.

Andy Gifford,
 via email

Disgrace to let Manston die

I DOUBT there are many countries in the world outside war zones which would let an airport such as Manston die on its feet.

It is a total disgrace. I very much doubt the alternative, so-called advanced manufacturing, will ever materialise. It is just a cover to get permission to build houses. However, a freight airport and hub for the south east would provide real jobs.

David Hutchison,
 via email

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

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- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
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- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Oasts at Ickham

by **Louis Borda,**
Ramsgate

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4X4 CLASSIC: the Jimny (left) is the UK's cheapest proper off-roader



VERSATILE SUV: Vitara (below) starts at just £13,999



REVIVAL SPARK: the Swift (above) has driven the Suzuki sales surge

Lightning addition to Suzuki line-up

BRAND UPDATE: Japanese marque revives the Baleno nameplate to add to a line-up known for delivering value, reliability and customer satisfaction...

SUZUKI will bring back the Baleno model in June, but it's unlikely to live up to its name – it means 'lightning' in Italian.

The previous Baleno (1995-02) didn't really have the spark either – in looks or demeanour – and the Japanese marque has 'previous' for some dodgy naming; the now much acclaimed Swift supermini sold for ages without offering any version that could be described as such.

But one thing Suzuki does well is make reliable cars and keep customers happy, as shown by many surveys.

So maybe the Baleno will light up a few owners' lives when it arrives, becoming a roomier supermini sister to the excellent and sporty looking Swift.

It is also to be hoped that the Baleno follows the example of other more recent Suzukis by being more interesting and better to drive than previously.

The Swift was pivotal in that perception, being taken in hand two generations ago and morphed into what is, pound for pound, now the most entertaining three and five-door supermini you can buy (from £8,999).

It also offers racy Sport and 4x4 versions and accounts for 30 per cent of Suzuki's UK sales – I

LAUNCHED IN JUNE: all-new Baleno supermini



know several motoring writers who own one.

Suzuki also launched the impressive Celerio (from £6,999) last year. It isn't the prettiest city car, but it is the most space efficient.

If you need something bigger, then the latest Vitara SUV (from £13,999) is available in front-wheel drive (FWD) or 4x4, or there's Suzuki's

Nissan Qashqai basher, the SX4 S-Cross – the name might be confusing, but it's good value, also from £13,999 with FWD and 4x4.

And the final member of this eclectic line-up is the legendary Jimny 4x4 (from £12,499) – still the UK market's cheapest new car for 'yomping' across rough terrain.

Viva the Viva – enlivening city car driving

ROAD TEST: Vauxhall revived a trusted name after some 35 years, creating a serious player for the hard fought city car sector...

IT'S probably a bit awkward that a car bearing the name Viva was allowed to die in the first place, but Vauxhall has resurrected it successfully after more than 35 years.

And it's the marque's entry model once more: a bargain from £7,995, driving as well as it looks, being cheap to insure and run – up to 65.7mpg combined with £20/year or zero road tax to pay – and generously equipped.

It also comes in versatile one-size-fits-all five-door format, able to seat five – when many city car rivals are strictly four-seaters – and there's a simple choice of two trims, SE and SL.

Both models also come with Vauxhall's brilliant 1.0-litre engine, already seen in turbocharged format in those other small Vauxhalls, the latest Corsa and the Adam premium runabout.

The inherent roughness of this three-cylinder unit has been engineered out to leave a light and pleasantly buzzy yet lively unit.

The Viva's 75bhp normally-aspirated variant plus five-speed manual 'box obviously lacks the punch of the turbo version, but Vauxhall argues that this delivers the price point



required at this end of the market and the Viva seems none the worse for it.

In fact, it is brilliant in its intended town habitat, while good fun to pilot solo on the open road, though naturally running out of puff a bit with a few bodies on board.

For such a small car it also rides

spectacularly well, while offering good cornering grip and minimal roll.

It has just two real rivals: Hyundai's i10 and the cloned VW Up/SEAT Mii/Skoda Citigo series.

The Hyundai is the most sophisticated: the Korean brand's previous i10 re-ignited the smallest car sector



and the current car put right its key failings, by being smarter, more refined and better made.

Meanwhile, the VW trio simply offers better cabin and boot space – the latter is particularly big and puts the Viva in the shade.

If I'm being picky, the Viva's cabin lacks a bit in verve and style too,

Vauxhall Viva SE

Price:	from £7,995
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
Best rival:	Hyundai i10

though everything is well arranged and durable. Rear legroom is also a bit tight and, while it can carry five people, Viva passenger No5 isn't going to have a happy journey.

The rear seats can also feel rather claustrophobic due to the convergence of the window and roof lines.

But standard kit is generous, including lane departure warning, speed-sensitive power steering with easy park 'City Mode' function, electric front windows, electrically adjustable/heated door mirrors, cruise control with speed limiter, steering wheel mounted audio controls, tiltable steering column plus height adjustable driver's seat, and 60/40 split-folding rear seat back.

Adding air con costs £500 on the SE – electronic climate control being standard on the posh SL model (£9,495).

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According to the critics, different is great, because they voted the Citroën C4 Cactus hatchback of the year. It's full of clever ideas like the protective side airbumps and instead of the usual cluttered dash, there's a simple 7" touchscreen with built-in reversing camera.¹ We think it looks pretty cool too, but that's just what happens when you do things out of the ordinary.

CRÉATIVE TECHNOLOGIE

CITROËN prefers TOTAL. *Prices & offers apply to retail sales of qualifying models ordered & delivered 04/01/31/03/16 or until such time as offers/prices may be withdrawn by Citroën at its complete discretion & include VAT, delivery to dealer & number plates, Government Registration Fee & 12 months' graduated vehicle excise duty. Optional paint available at extra cost. Elect 4 Personal Lease rentals shown apply to C4 Cactus PureTech 82 manual Feel - C4 Cactus BlueHdi 100 manual Flair respectively. Model shown: Citroën C4 Cactus PureTech 110 565 manual Flair (incl. Blue Lagoon paint, thermally insulated panoramic sunroof and 17" black 'Cross' alloy wheels) from £189 per month. One significant advance rental will be required, which varies by model, followed by 34 monthly rentals at the rates shown & a significant optional final rental. Excess mileage charges may apply if the agreed annual mileage is exceeded. Payment of the optional final rental extends the rental term (this does not transfer title of the vehicle) & requires an annual rental equivalent to one month's rental. Finance subject to status. Finance provided by and written quotations available on request from PSA Finance UK Limited (company registration number 01024322) 1/5 Citroën Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1QA, UK. Citroën Financial Services is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Over 18s only. A guarantee may be required. Thames Motor Group (Tunbridge Wells) Ltd is acting as a credit broker and is not a lender. To finance your lease we may introduce you to a limited number of lenders. *Optional at extra cost on C4 Cactus Feel, available as standard on C4 Cactus Flair. Also includes rear parking sensors. Offers & specification correct at time of going to press from participating Dealers. Terms & conditions apply. Please ask us for details. Subject to stock availability.

Official Government fuel consumption figures (Range): Urban cycle, Extra urban, Combined (litres per 100km/mpg) & CO₂ emissions (g/km); Highest: Citroën C4 Cactus PureTech 110 S&S manual Feel 5.8/48.7, 4/70.6, 4.7/60.1, 107. Lowest: Citroën C4 Cactus BlueHdi 100 S&S ETG6 Feel 3.9/72.4, 3.2/88.3, 3.4/83.1, 89. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.

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19 September, 2016 • Quote: AB9

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31 August, 2016 - Quote: RN8

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22 September, 2016 • Quote: RR9

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Rhine Christmas River Cruise

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22 December, 2016 • Quote: RX12

Experience the Christmas splendours and stunning scenery along the Rhine on this festive river cruise. Germany is famed for its Christmas celebrations and markets and this holiday includes visits to some of the famous towns along the Rhine with festive markets. Every year, thousands of lights, countless traditional traders and a rich selection of specialities attract visitors from all around the world. Ports of call include Cologne, Koblenz, Rudesheim, Mainz, Mannheim and Boppard.

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Cars sales rocket to new record

SALES of new cars in the UK are really motoring, hitting a record 2.63 million vehicles last year.

The 6.3 per cent boost was the fourth rise in as many years, confounding all expectations and re-iterating confidence in the UK economy.

Significantly, the previous record dated from before the Noughties recession – 2003's 2.58 million landmark.

Last year's momentum continued even up to Christmas, usually a time when buyers' thoughts are on presents and sourcing a tree to decorate.

The 2015 growth also came across all sectors, fleet and private, petrol and diesel, and even electric cars and plug-in hybrids.

Mike Hawes, chief executive of motor industry mouthpiece, the SMMT, said: "The new car market defied expectations in 2015, hitting an all-time record driven by strong consumer and business confidence. Buyers took advantage of attractive finance deals and low inflation to secure some of the most innovative, high tech and fuel efficient vehicles ever produced. The past four years have seen a remarkable period of sustained growth, and the outlook remains positive, with every reason to expect the market to hold broadly steady in 2016."

Check out the rest of our supplement for buying your new '16 plate' car.

Peugeot's mid-size 308 – the SW or estate variant is pictured here



Left, Renault's Captur is one of the most stylish crossovers. Right, FIAT'S sporting spin-off Abarth produces this hot 500 version

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Astra SRi 1.0i Turbo 105PS Start/Stop ecoFLEX: Urban: 54.3 (5.2), Extra-urban: 72.4 (3.9), Combined: 64.2 (4.4). CO₂ emissions: 102g/km.*

Personal contract hire offer on New Astra SRi 1.0i 105PS Turbo S/S ecoFLEX, on orders received between 1 January and 31 March 2016, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £269, then 35 monthly rentals of £269. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 15000 over 36 months charged at 10.46 pence per mile. Excess charges also apply if you breach manufacturer servicing or maintenance guidelines or if the car exceeds BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age/mileage when it is returned to Vauxhall Leasing. Package includes Road Fund Licence and Vauxhall Assistance. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. Prices and details are subject to change without notice. For full specification and Ts&Cs contact your local Retailer. **You will not own the car.** ALD Automotive Ltd, trading as Vauxhall Leasing, BS16 3JA. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. #MPG figures are official test data and may not reflect real driving results. *Wi-Fi available only when OnStar activated. OnStar available as standard on selected models. OnStar services free for 12 months. Subscription charges apply thereafter. Correct at time of going to press.



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*Clio monthly payment based on £2,207 deposit, 24 monthly payments of £159, optional final payment of £6,153. Captur monthly payment based on £1,504 deposit, 24 monthly payments of £199, optional final payment of £8,715. Finance provided by Renault Finance, PO Box 149, Watford WD17 1FJ. Subject to status. Indemnities may be required. UK residents only (excluding the Channel Islands). Over 18s. Terms and conditions apply. Offer based on 6,000 miles per annum, excess mileage 8p per mile inc VAT. Finance available on selected new vehicles when ordered between 12 February and 31 March 2016 and registered by 30 June 2016. Excludes Renaultsport and Expression models. Offer for **£500 cashback towards your fuel (including VAT) is available to retail customers only on new Clio and Captur models when ordered between 12 February and 14 March 2016 and registered by 31 March 2016. Clio shown has optional i.d. metallic paint, at an extra £595. Captur shown with metallic i.d. paint, and painted roof at an extra £894.

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Book a test-drive

A testing time... make the most of it

BUYERS' attitude to road testing before they commit to a new car ranges from obsession to indifference, but make sure you do it before you sign the paperwork.

We say:

- Book early - New Reg is a busy time for dealers, so map out a test schedule, driving each candidate soon after another for more accurate comparisons. It helps that many dealers are grouped at 'motor city' sites like Broad Oak at Canterbury, Ashford's Orbital Park and Dowding Way, Tunbridge Wells, allowing easy shuttling from one dealer to the next.

- Don't be hurried - yes, dealers are busy, but insist on time to test the car in town traffic, on the motorway or a high speed road and on less well-maintained rural roads. An hour should be sufficient - if you avoid traffic jams.

- What are you looking for?

Experience of different road surfaces, highlighting seating and ride comfort issues, plus engine, wind, tyre and mechanical noise. And especially...

- Do you like the controls? It used to be easy to find your way around dashboards, but most carmakers are now going their own way in search of the best human interaction, but they actually don't suit everyone. Touch-

Steve Loader

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

screens for sounds and sat nav, and electronic handbrakes are just two possible bugbears.

- Is it the right spec? Try to get a test car as close to the one you are interested in, even if you have to wait a few days extra or go to another dealership.

- Make it a family outing - it can be a painful process of 'are we there yet?' proportions, but try to get as many of the would-be car users involved in the test drive - drivers and non-drivers. This can answer questions about comfort and visibility in the rear and, specifically, is there really room for three across the back seat, especially if one place has to take a strap-in child seat or booster? Also, can you lift shopping in and out of the boot easily or indeed, is there much of a boot?

- Don't feel pressured - whether you have one or several candidates to check out. Always go away and weigh your thoughts; maybe leave the salesman with a reason to be cheerful by asking whether it would be OK to come back later for another test drive. If the reaction is not good then you've learned something there too!



Do you simply go for supermini style and economy with something like Peugeot's 208?



Hyundai i30 versus Vauxhall Astra hatchback maybe?



Or do you favour a particular brand, but need to decide between the versatile FIAT 500L MPV or its crossover/SUV 500X sister perhaps?



GUIDE: The do's and don'ts to consider before buying a new car...

DO

ASK for trimmings like a tank of fuel, car mats or further discounts or extras.

Pick a model that saves fuel, insurance, road tax and depreciation - it isn't getting any easier out there. The Personal Contract Purchase (PCP) is now the nation's favourite way to acquire a new car because the driver knows what he has to budget for - the best is Peugeot's

Just Add Fuel, which means just that.

Tread carefully with 'eco' models: check price, running costs, green credentials and savings on planned mileage versus years of ownership, then compare the closest standard version. The latter's overall savings might surprise you.

Make the most of your part exchange. Assuming you are not trading in a banger that the dealer

will simply pack off to the nearest auction, it pays to make the most of your old car. Clean and polish it and replace obvious missing items such as a wheel cover or badge; don't give the salesman an excuse to mark its value down. And make sure all the paperwork and history is neatly packaged up to go with the car; be critical of your old motor and put right what you can without spending big.

DON'T

Accept the first deal on offer - be ready to haggle.

Fall for what seems like a big bargain before you even haggle. It could be an unpopular engine/trim combination or a car on 'run-out' where production ceased a while ago. It might depreciate badly.

Assume a diesel will save: you usually pay more upfront for diesel power, so you must cover more miles

to claw that money back in fuel economy. And the engines are generally heavier, causing more wear on front tyres and mechanicals. We also know that diesel emissions are finally being called into question, while the economy and emissions on small petrol cars have improved dramatically and they are often nicer to drive. In short - do your sums.

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Small stands tall in car market

FUEL bills may be tumbling, but past price hikes have helped force a rapid downshift in the car size we prefer.

Insurance premiums, greater environmental awareness, and punitive road tax on larger cars, have also helped turn us away from the typical family car, once

epitomized by those ubiquitous Fords, the Cortina, Sierra and Mondeo, and squeezing us into family hatchbacks first, and now superminis.

The supermini, and even smaller city car, now have around 40 per cent of new car sales, followed by family hatchbacks with around 25 per cent.

It might not be long though before family hatchbacks are under threat too from the new kid on the block, the crossover. As the name implies, this straddles several sectors by being part family hatch, part MPV (multi-purpose vehicle) or people carrier, and part SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle) and is highlighted by cars like the

Hyundai Tucson, Renault Captur and Peugeot 3008.

Nobody is saying this burgeoning sector will catch the supermini/city car though, which packs so much into a small package.

Even the commonality of the two-box supermini shape – dictated by the need for compact on-road dimensions – can be disguised by

ever more imaginative customization.

This might be a roof of a different colour, pattern or decal such as a flag, or it could be special wheels, bespoke door mirrors, or a wild paint job – small cars have similar proportions, but they don't have to look alike.



SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL: Renault's Clio supermini or Twingo city car, the Hyundai i20, Vauxhall Corsa or the retro FIAT 500

'Greening it' can help save the planet as well as a few pennies

IT'S good to choose cars that are eco-friendly, but savvy drivers know going green also saves money.

Many new models not only help to offset ever-rising fuel bills, but also lower or even remove road tax bills altogether. The latest tax bandings range from zero for cars with the lowest CO2 emissions (below 100g/km) right up to £1,100 a year for gas guzzlers.

OK, that's small change to anyone spending £50,000-100,000 on a car, but most of us like savings on fuel and tax while also doing our bit for the environment.

Longer term, electric cars may be the answer because they are quiet, cheap to fuel and emission free at the point of use, but battery technology must catch up and the emissions argument for electric is misleading. Until we have zero emission power

stations, electric cars may simply transfer CO2 and noxious gas output from exhaust pipe to belching chimney. Production of hydrogen to power our cars raises a similar dilemma.

Are hybrids the answer then? Well, they tend to be dearer upfront, but savings on running costs and tax can be significant, particularly for company car drivers.

On the other hand, everyday

internal combustion engine running costs and emissions are falling while efficiency increases. In fact, things are moving so fast that you marvel at what Government prodding has achieved.

Most carmakers now have an eco sub-brand, but buyers must weigh potential long-term savings against upfront cost; if you don't cover enough miles to make fuel savings offset the eco car's purchase price,

conventional alternatives may be a better bet.

Don't ignore petrol cars either; the higher price of diesels and the fuel must be compared with new small capacity low emission/consumption yet lively turbocharged petrol engines. And if you are considering a supermini or family hatchback, it's best to avoid diesel completely unless covering 'galactic' mileages.

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Headteacher: Mrs J Timoney
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Tel: 01304 201964
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E-mail: office@harbour.kent.sch.uk

Harbour Specialist School is a special day school for children with behavioural and learning difficulties. The school has a mixed roll of 108 students between the ages of 5 and 16. The school has been assessed as Outstanding following the last three consecutive Ofsted inspections. The most recent inspection report was published in May 2014.

Vacancies for

Key Stage 2 Teachers

Permanent, full time positions.
Applications welcome from newly qualified teachers and experienced practitioners.
MPS-UPS plus SEN £4,034 - Start: September 2016

Due to a restructure of our curriculum, we are looking to appoint four dynamic, innovative and creative individuals who are passionate about improving outcomes for our pupils with social and emotional difficulties. We are looking for two teachers to work in our Primary phase and two teachers to take our Y7 classes, teaching them English, maths and Humanities subjects. One teacher will also teach Y8 English and one will teach Y8 maths. Our pupils in KS3 are working within the KS2 objectives.

Vacancy for a

Design & Technology Teacher

Permanent, full time or part-time position.
Applications welcome from newly qualified teachers and experienced practitioners.
MPS-UPS plus SEN £4,034 - Start: September 2016

We are looking to appoint a teacher of Design Technology to teach across the school from Y5 to Y11. We are looking for a dynamic, innovative and creative individual who will motivate and enthuse our pupils to take Entry Level or GCSE exams in the subject and possibly study related subjects post 16. The successful candidate will teach DT for four days per week with the option of a further day per week teaching MFL to KS3 to create a full-time post.

The successful candidates will have a high level of emotional intelligence and resilience, a flexible approach to their work and an ability to embrace change. Candidates will need to possess a sound knowledge of the new National Curriculum, different learning styles and differentiation. An understanding of how to actively engage pupils within lessons is essential. Previous experience working with children with special educational needs would be desirable, however, applications from NQTs with a commitment to working with pupils with Special Needs will also be considered. The school places a high priority on professional and career development.

Harbour School is committed to safeguarding and promoting child welfare. This position is subject to an enhanced DBS check, pre-employment medical clearance, good references and verification of the right to work in the UK.

Visits to the school are welcome and can be arranged via the school office. For more information and an application pack, please contact the school office. No CV's will be accepted

Closing date: 14th March 2016 - Interviews: 21st and 22nd March 2016



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Please visit our website www.sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk for more information and where the application pack can be downloaded.

We are committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service check.

Closing date for applications: 7th March 2016

Interviews will take place week commencing 7th March 2016

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

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ACT 2009**

**APPLICATION FOR LIFETIME
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OF EXPORT CABLING**

Notice is hereby given that Greater Gabbard OFTO plc has applied to the Marine Management Organisation under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, Part 4, for a marine licence to undertake operation and maintenance activities too the Greater Gabbard Export cable. Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Leiston Library.

Copies of the application and associated information may be viewed on line in the Public Register at www.gov.uk/check-marine-licence-register.

Representations or objections in respect of the application should be made in writing, giving an address to which correspondence relating to the representation or objection may be sent, to the Marine Management Organisation, Lancaster House, Hampshire Court, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7YH, or alternatively emailed to andrew.souter@marinemangement.org.uk, within 28 days of 27/02/2016, quoting reference MLA/2016/00033.

The Marine Management Organisation will pass to the applicant a copy of any objection or representation we receive.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Section 63 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

**APPOINTMENT OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE STAND ON MOUNT EPHRAIM
ROAD, STATION APPROACH, MOUNT PLEASANT AVENUE & MOUNT
PLEASANT ROAD BOROUGH OF ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS**

Notice is hereby given that the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council proposes, under the provisions of the above statute, to appoint a **hackney carriage stand in the Borough of Royal Tunbridge Wells:**

- Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells - west side (in lay-by only fronting Tunbridge Wells Central Station) - between a point 45 metres north of its junction with Grove Hill Road and a point 29 metres south of its southern junction with Mount Pleasant Avenue
- Mount Pleasant Avenue, Tunbridge Wells - south side; between points 13 metres east and 45 metres east of its southern junction with Mount Pleasant Road.
- Station Approach, Tunbridge Wells, outside the train station - (East side) between points 27 metres north and 42 metres north of its junction with Vale Road.
- Mount Ephraim Road - (North side) between points 103 metres east and 125 metres east of its junction with Hanover Road.

Objections/representations with respect to the proposal, together with the grounds on which they are made, must be made in writing within 28 days of the first publication of this notice. The last date for objections/representations is **25th March 2016**. Please write to the Senior Licensing Officer, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS or email licensing@tunbridgewells.gov.uk.

Please note that all objections/representations received may be considered in public by the Council and that the substance of any objection/representation together with the name and address of the person making it, could become available for inspection.

Licensing Department
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Town Hall
Crescent Road
TN1 1RS

Jonathan McDonald
Director of Planning & Development

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Eagles to spread wings into Kent?

Crystal Palace are looking for a training base in the county

Football

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

CRYSTAL Palace chairman Steve Parish says the club are looking for a new training ground in Kent.

The Premier League side play their home games at Selhurst Park, and currently train in Beckenham, but are now searching for a new base having outgrown the site on Copers Cope Road.

However, difficulty in securing a prime location over the last few months means the Eagles may have to spread their wings beyond Croydon and Bromley, and look further south into areas of Kent.

Parish told KoS: "Initially we wanted to stay in Bromley, because so many of our supporters live there.

"But land is in short supply in our part of the world and that's making life difficult because our academy needs the extra space.

"When we have found a spot we've been unable to agree a price, or it's already been snapped up by housing developers, but it's a free world and that's fair enough if they don't want to sell.

"We're now having to look into areas of Kent because we're finding it tricky to find a spare 50 acres of land."

Now a well-established Premier League club, who last weekend booked their place in the FA Cup quarter-finals, Palace believe they are a team on the up, and need better infrastructure to take themselves to the next level.

Parish says that the club will most likely have to spend "tens of millions" in order to nail down an ideal site and are considering all options to ensure



CHAIRMAN: Steve Parish

Pictures: TONY O'BRIEN

all the necessary boxes are ticked.

"If we were to train in Kent obviously we'd be a little bit out of the way," Parish admitted.

"But we are the club with the 28th biggest turnover in the world, and we don't have the 28th best facilities so

we need to move somewhere with more space.

"Having said that, we don't want to rush it, because if you're laying out that amount of money, you don't want to be looking again for another place in a couple of years time."

Sheppey fighter Jones tops Medway Park bill

Boxing

UNDEFEATED heavyweight boxer Dave Jones will take centre stage at Gillingham's Medway Park on March 5 when he takes on Hungarian Ferenc Zsalek.

The Sheppey-born fighter tops the bill on next Saturday's Best of the Best show, which features a number of promising boxing talents from around the county.

Jones, 34, has clocked up five wins on the spin in his first 15 months in the paid ranks, kicking off with a points win over Moses Matovu at the York Hall in Bethnal Green in September 2014.

His sixth career contest will double up as his maiden six-rounder and first time headlining a show, but



HEAVYWEIGHT: Dave Jones

he insists there are no nerves going into the fight.

"I'll cope with it well," he said.

"No extra pressure, not at all. At the end of the day, I'm getting out there and fighting and it's all the same.

"I was ready to do six rounds for the last fight, I've got fitter and fitter with each fight I've had.

"I used to be in the army so was always fit as anything and I've just carried that on, I've got a fast work rate for a heavyweight."

The headliner's previous three bouts have all been fought at Medway Park and Jones claims the sport is growing in stature across the county.

"These shows are doing brilliant for the area," he said.

"The unlicensed boxing has always been the main thing going on in Kent but the professional boxing is taking off now."

Sport Shorts

» Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Tom Pyman on 01233653477

New Zealand batsman Latham signs for 2016

KENT have made their second signing in the space of a week after snapping up New Zealand international batsman Tom Latham.

After bringing in Kagiso Rabada on a short-term deal last Thursday, the club have now brought in Latham, 23, to play in all formats ahead of the 2016 season.

The left-hander said: "I'm delighted to have joined Kent for the season. Playing county cricket has always been a goal of mine. I've heard great things about the playing group and coaching staff, so I can't wait to get started and help the boys push for some silverware."

Latham scored 63 in the first test against Australia earlier this month and is due to join the Kent squad before the County Championship season kicks off on Sunday, April 10.

Head coach Jimmy Adams said: "We're delighted to have Tom playing with us this season. He brings valuable experience gained from playing at the international level across all formats."



COACH: Jimmy Adams



PRODIGY: Morgan Archer

Swale sailing star to scoop regional award

A TEENAGE sailor from Lynsted, Swale, has scooped a regional youth champion award in recognition of his achievements in 2015.

In the Topper class – recognised as being on the pathway to Olympic class – Morgan Archer, 14, represented Team GBR at the Irish Nationals and World Championships in Italy last year, before winning the South East Zone Championships, the

11-event 2015 Topper South East Traveller Series, and the first event of the National Series at Rutland.

Morgan, who has sailed at a club in Cliffe since the age of seven, said: "During 2016 I want to show my appreciation by continuing to maintain consistent results by increasing my fitness and concentrating on my squad coursework to further my sailing knowledge."

Fannin joins PFL Motorsport

FORMER British GT4 champion Jody Fannin will drive the Aston Martin Vantage GT3 for PFL Motorsport in this year's British GT Championship.

Fannin, 22, from Edenbridge, signed off from the 2015 British GT season with a pole and two podiums in a TF Sport Aston Martin, and is relishing his second full championship in GT3, where he will drive alongside Paul Littler.

He said: "I'm really pleased that I am continuing in the V12 Vantage in 2016 and look forward to working with PFL Motorsport and Peter Littler.

"When we first met it was clear that we shared the same objectives and I can't wait to get started."

The championship's first round begins at the classic Brands Hatch GP circuit on April 16 and 17.

Keep up-to-date with all Kent's sports news via social media on:



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FROM THE WRITER OF THE LADY IN THE VAN



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By Alan Bennett.

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